Frida Kahlo: Stalinist, Drug Addict, Role Model

The Washington Monthly

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BOMB SADDAM?

How the obsession of a few neocon hawks became the central goal of U.S. foreign policy

BY JOSHUA MICAH MARSHALL

Jeff Greenfield on Cicero • Joseph Epstein on Snobbery

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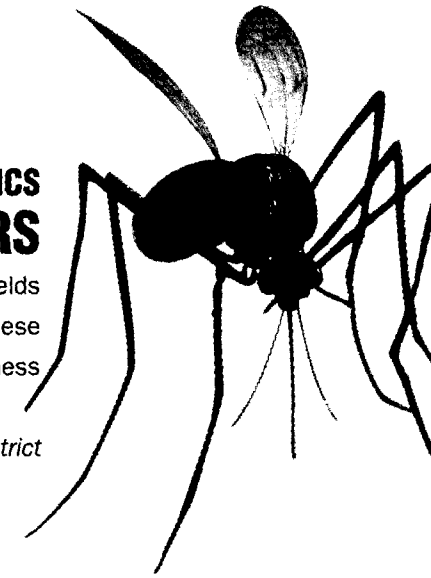
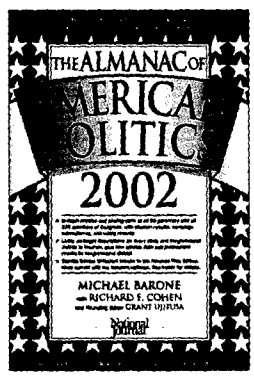
INCLUDING BLOOD-SUCKING WHINERS

"Behind the Shore are swamp and flatland, the Pine Barrens and vegetable fields that give New Jersey the name 'Garden State.' Growth has been slow in these small towns and gas station intersections, communities in whose eerie calmness in the summer you can hear mosquitoes whining."

—*The Almanac of American Politics on New Jersey's 2nd Congressional District*





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Letters

Quack Science

Congratulations on Chris Mooney's exposé of the "alternative medicine" story, a set of events unprecedented in medicine, and the greatest challenge to science since 1910. For the first time in a century, political pressures and mystical beliefs reached a critical mass, driving unnecessary research and promoting ideologically-based medicine. We have more negative studies disproving the most popular alternative methods than for any standard method proven ineffective. The reason the movement persists, as Mr. Mooney and Dr. Novella point out, is that advocates will not relieve themselves of their beliefs, no matter how much negative research surrounds them. And the public gets deluded into following them.

Add to that the abuse of congressional power by senators and congressmen who also believe and are wasting hundreds of millions of dollars on ill-conceived medical perpetual-motion machines.

The press, initially lulled into thinking collectively that some hidden cache of wonder lay beneath the claims, has finally recognized it has been conned. Finally, the courage to tell it like it really is has materialized.

WALLACE SAMPSON, M.D.
Editor, The Scientific Review of Alternative Medicine

Good Guys in the Saddle

In her April 2002 article, "Lone-Star Justice," Stephanie Mencimer refers to Judge Royce Lamberth as "a cowboy on the bench." That is a good thing. Cowboys are decent, honest, hard-working men who love horses and respect women. They are not rash, impetuous, or abrupt. They take their time to do a good job. Cowboys are not stupid but instead are well-reasoned. If I were lucky enough to be called a "cowboy" by *The Washington Monthly*, I would be proud. Let's reserve the word "cowboy" for good things.

MAXWELL EDISON
Dallas, Texas

Poll Positions

I found Joshua Green's article on polling ("The Other War Room" April 2002) just fascinating. Bush's use of polling, not to respond to legitimate concerns of the American public, but simply to better "sell" or "spin" his preconceived right-wing agenda, is very revealing. It tells us much about the deceptive methods and strategy that Bush and his top political operatives are using to run the country. Thanks for the great piece!

SUSAN SANCHEZ
Boynton Beach, Fla.

Green called the president a liar based on Bush's statement that "A leader is somebody who is willing to take positions based on principle, not polls or focus groups." Just because Bush commissions polls does not mean, or even imply, that he takes positions or makes policy based on them. It just means he's informed and wants to know how his message is perceived and how to better communicate. Polls are tools to use in effective communication.

CINDY EDGE
via email

Horny Clerics

I have been reading and admiring Charles Peters for more years than I care to admit, but his item about the current furor over sexual abuse of children in the Roman Catholic Church ("Tilting at Windmills" April 2002) has me wondering if he periodically goes off the deep end. The problem is *not* the "threat of horny clerics" but the reality of pedophiles, who would not be controlled by "marrying either women or gay partners." Nor does having no altar boys solve the problem. Many of the children were taken out of Christian education classes and abused. Let's not blame altar boys for the problem, or does Mr. Peters want to take a further leap and blame rape on women's suggestive clothing? Please tell him to get a grip. By the way, I am a happily married Episcopal priest.

JAMES M. SHIELDS
Columbia, Md.

Nobody Special

While I very much enjoyed Lorraine Adams's "The Rise of the Nobody Memoir" in your April 2002 issue, I was sorry that she missed the memoirs I relished as a young girl. Three immediately come to mind: *The Egg and I*, by Betty MacDonald, about a newlywed woman's life on a chicken ranch; *Mink on Weekdays*, by Felicia Kaplan Lamport, the story of a wealthy girlhood with a remarkable mom; and *My Sister Eileen*, by Ruth McKenney, about two sisters seeking careers in Manhattan. None involves childhood abuse or physical or mental catastrophe (unless you count having a mother who occasionally embarrasses you).

I don't know how Ms. Adams chose the memoirs for her article, but these and other memoirs by "nobodies" did tell stories of falling in love, marriages, weddings, middle age. Perhaps it's their lack of catastrophe that led them to fall out of favor.

However, for me, growing up in the 1960s, it was these stories of women coping with careers and marriages on a day-to-day basis that helped me define who I wanted to be when I grew up. During those days before women's studies, school books were filled with famous men in history, none of whom seemed to offer anything to me. It was these seemingly simple tales about defining a life—specifically, a woman's life—that meant so much to me.

LAURA JACOBY
via email

In her article about memoirs by "nobodies" ("those who are neither generals, statesmen, celebrities nor their kin"), Lorraine Adams omits the 1892 book, *Diary of a Nobody*, the first so named and one of the funniest books in the English language.

DON PHILLIPSON
Ottawa, Canada

Lorraine Adams replies: Diary of a Nobody *is indeed funny, but it is fiction, not memoir, and hence outside the ambit of my essay.*

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Nuts to Torrey

There is a very good reason why California law prohibits the incarceration of mental patients ("Hippie Healthcare Policy," by E. Fuller Torrey, April 2002). Mental illness is not a crime. In the nominal case, that is how it should be. Medication, hospitalization, and prison are all forms of societal treatment. All should require due process on behalf of the accused.

It is a serious matter to judge someone unfit to make their own decisions. Yet doctors continue to argue for this exemplary power that even judges and elected officials do not have. An accusation of murder affords a certain set of rights. Yet the author seems to argue that an accusation of depressive, schizophrenic, or suicidal behavior should afford even fewer rights than this.

The author makes some very good points as to how the CMHS is running amok with a very large federal grant. However, his underlying thesis rests on the assumption that people who eat from garbage cans should be medicated as a matter of course. That *is* the 1950s' mindset, and in this context, it is not at all clear why the 1960s anti-establishment view is any less relevant today.

MICHAEL SHURPIK
Cambridge, Mass.

E. Fuller Torrey would have *Washington Monthly* readers believe that large numbers of people with mental illness don't get needed treatment because state legislatures won't enact tougher forcible-treatment laws. In contrast, the U.S. Surgeon General's definitive Report on Mental Health highlights the formidable financial barriers that profoundly limit people's access to needed mental healthcare. Yet Torrey would recklessly slash the modest funding provided the single federal agency dedicated to improving the quality and availability of mental health services, the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), because the agency doesn't subscribe to his dogma.

Torrey displays loose or highly selective regard for fact in attacking those who reject his anachronistic views. I take particular exception to his mischaracterization of the National Mental Health Association (NMHA) and its advocacy work. As the oldest, largest nonprofit organization addressing all aspects of mental health and mental illness, NMHA has aggressively and successfully supported federal funding for mental health programs for over 90 years—long before CMHS was created. Our view has been, and remains, that the federal investment in mental health and prevention and treatment of mental illness is grossly inadequate.

We are but one of over 300 CMHS grantees. NMHA also vigorously lobbies Congress on behalf of other agencies and departments which provide it no funds. NMHA is proud of the successful work it has done with support from CMHS, for example, creating a National Consumer Supporter Technical Assistance Center (NMHA put up nearly $80,000 to match the CMHS's 1998 grant of $250,000). We are proud to be a voice—across a broad spectrum of federal programs and departments—for people with or at risk of mental illness and substance abuse disorders.

MICHAEL FAENZA
President and CEO National Mental Health Association, Alexandria, Va.

Dr. Torrey replies: The issue that underlies the letter by Mr. Shurpik is whether individuals with severe psychiatric disorders are competent to make decisions about their own care. Multiple studies have shown that approximately half of them have significantly impaired awareness of their illness because of brain dysfunction and thus may not be competent. Would the writers also defend the rights of individuals with Alzheimer's disease to eat from garbage cans and to "debate the issues in order to reach a consensus"? When treatment must be imposed, it should, of course, be done with extensive checks to prevent abuses.

The issue that underlies Mr. Faenza's letter is simpler. As a major beneficiary of the federal faucet under attack, he would understandably like to see the funds continue to flow.

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Tilting at Windmills

The Reduction of Tom Ridge • Sympathy for the Devil • Tummy Tucks and Templelifts
Father Shanley's Interesting Vocation • Succumbing to Cell Phones

WHY DO CELL PHONE USERS tend to shout? The question has long mystified me, but now that I have finally succumbed to progress and acquired one of these devices, I understand. Most of these phones are so small that if you hold one end to your ear, the other end, which on regular phones is in front of your mouth, is at least a couple of inches away, so that you have no confidence that your voice will reach it unless you raise it considerably above its normal level. The truth is that unless the connection is bad, your usual volume will work just fine. But even when you know this to be so, I have to confess that it's hard to overcome the urge to speak up.

By the way, the "quiet car" on Amtrak's Acela Express is a myth. I've been teaching at Columbia this spring and have returned to Washington on that train several times. The 5 p.m. Acela in particular has been so crowded that the quiet car has been taken over by cell phone users. But here's a travel tip: The 4:30 p.m. Metroliner from New York to Washington is running half empty, so that the quiet car is really quiet. The same is true of the 9 a.m. Metroliner from Washington to New York.

Most people seem to think the Acela is a lot faster than the Metroliner. The fact is that the 5 p.m. Acela is only nine minutes faster than the 4:30 p.m. Metroliner, which is also $19 cheaper each way.

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WHEN JOSHUA GREEN EXPOSED the absurd disorganization of our defenses against terrorism in these pages a year ago ("Weapons of Mass Confusion," May 2001), he emphasized the need for an office with the power to impose order on the existing chaos. Then came September 11, quickly followed by George W. Bush's promise to do just that by naming Tom Ridge to head the Office of Homeland Security. It has, however, become increasingly clear that Ridge's authority is modest. Recently, a top Pentagon official was asked why Ridge was not consulted about the decision to cut back air patrols over Washington and New York. The reply was: "We don't tell the Office of Homeland Security about recommendations, only about decisions."

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SPEAKING OF THOSE AIR PATrols, the excuse given for the cutback is the great improvement in airport security. The same justification was given for the decision to change the flight paths from Reagan National Airport. And although the decision to eliminate the requirement that air marshals be aboard all flights into Reagan remains classified, I suspect that the same justification applies. Yet over and over, we hear stories indicating that airport security is not so hot. The latest from *The Washington Post*: "Security Gaps Remain at Dulles." When I recently had a chance to ask Michael Jackson, the Deputy Secretary of Transportation, about these seeming inconsistencies, his reply was that we were protected by "a system of systems." His words would have been more reassuring had he offered any specifics to explain what he meant. Instead, I'm afraid I have to say that his answer strikes me as the kind of bullshit bureaucrats fall back on when they have no real defense for what they're doing

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THE REV. PAUL R. SHANLEY, who was recently returned to Massachusetts to answer an indictment for sexual abuse of a child, has enjoyed an unusual religious vocation. While being paid by the Boston archdiocese, he became owner, along with another Roman cleric, the Rev. John J. White, of the Cabana Club Resort in Palm Springs, Calif., described by Nick Madigan of *The New York Times* as "one of many hotels that cater to the town's gays." Whispering Palms, another hotel owned by White, is described by a guest as "one of the friskier places," featuring nude sunbathing and sex by the pool. But don't think piety was totally neglected amidst the frolic. "On occasion," reports Madigan, "[Father Shanley] helped out at St. Anne Church in San Bernardino, celebrating a weekend Mass or leading youth retreats."

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PERHAPS THE MOST UNHEEDED of all my advice to young journalists is the suggestion that it might be wise for them to get some experience in the field they're going to cover before launching their reporting careers. But recently two powerful examples have come along to support my case. I've already mentioned that Bethany McLean, the young reporter who was the first to see through Enron, had worked on Wall Street before joining *For-*

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tune. Now there's the news that Gretchen Morgenson had similar experience before becoming a reporter for *The New York Times* and winning a Pulitzer for her revelations about brokerage analysts who tilt their stock recommendations in favor of companies that do business with the analysts' firms. I know my own experience as a lawyer, legislator, and bureaucrat has helped me immeasurably in my coverage of courts, Congress, and executive branch agencies. Because of this inside experience, I have at least a glimmer of understanding of how courts are run for the benefit of judges, of why congressmen can't come up with the right follow-up question, and why bureaucrats devote so much time to writing memoranda and attending meetings.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN is spending $100 million on the renovation of its football stadium. The result will be 93 new luxury boxes. They will include television sets, a wet bar, and climate control. Why does college football need luxury suites?

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HAVING BEEN A POLITICIAN was another experience that helped me as a journalist. I emphasize this because too many editors think of politics as a contaminant that disqualifies one from a career in journalism. But that attitude produces reporting that is notably lacking in empathy. Among the few writers to exhibit empathy for politicians were Theodore White in his *Making of the President* series, Richard Ben Cramer in *What it Takes*, and Robert Caro in his chapter on Sam Rayburn in *The Path to Power*. This failure of empathy was most absurdly expressed in the outrage over Clinton's use of the Lincoln Bedroom and White House coffees to repay contributors. Would the reporters have preferred that he sell out on issues?

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SPEAKING OF GRETCHEN MORGENSON, *The Wall Street Journal* has come up with smoking-gun confirmation that she is right. It has obtained copies of letters from two major Wall Street firms—Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette and Credit Suisse First Boston—offering jobs to analysts and promising compensation for investment banking business they help bring to the firm.

Health insurers want it both ways—to bank your premiums when you're healthy, but also to make you pay more when you get sick.

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MY WIFE RECENTLY RECEIVED A brochure from The Institute Specializing in the Technology of Beauty in Marina Del Rey, Calif. The range of services is impressive. I had no idea that there were so many kinds of plastic surgery available to those who are unhappy with the way they look. In case you are similarly innocent, here's the list: Facial Rejuvenation, Laser Assisted Facelifts, Band-Aid Facelifts, Vertical Facelifts, Endoscopic Brow Lifts, Templelifts, Eyelid Surgery, Rhinoplasty, Cheek Implants, Neck Lifts, Lip Augmentation, Laser Skin Resurfacing, Scar Revision, Laser Breast Surgery, Laser Breast Reduction, Laser Breast Lifts, Vertical Breast Lifts, Breast Augmentation, Implant Exchange, Inverted Nipple Repair, Tummy Tucks, Liposuction.

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NEW YORK STATE HAS A BASIC examination that is required for the certification of teachers. Thirty-three hundred uncertified teachers have not taken the test; 3,000 who have taken it have never passed; 1,161 have taken it at least four times without passing. Yet *The New York Times* reports: "Teachers' performance on the exam is a strong predictor of their students' performance." Unsurprisingly, teacher performance on the exam is worst among teachers from the worst schools. Some certification requirements, e.g. education courses, are silly. But this exam does not seem to be one of them. It just doesn't make sense to let teachers continue to teach who repeatedly are unable to pass it.

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I THOUGHT THE IDEA OF health insurance was that the insurance company would profit from your periods of good health and thus be able to pay for your care when you got sick. But now comes the news that health insurers want it both ways. They're happy to bank your premiums when you're healthy, but when you get sick they want you to pay more. An example from a recent *Wall Street Journal* article by Chad Terhune: "Shaneen and Tom Wahl of Port Charlotte, Fla., where paying $417 a month for health insurance when Mrs. Wahl was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1996. Since then their premiums have been regularly increased, reaching $1,881 a month by 2000."

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WE'RE HAPPY TO REPORT THAT in April the University of North Carolina abolished early admissions. The previous month the same step was taken by Wisconsin's Beloit College. This is good news because early admissions, as we have pointed out, favor the well off at the expense of the poor.

Another piece of good news for low-income students is that Bethany College's decision to slash its tuition by 42 percent has worked out not only for the students but for the college. Its fresh-

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man enrollment has increased by 58 percent.

Still more good news for students—and for the government—and from an unlikely source. Rep. Dan Burton (R-Ind.) has not been one of my heroes, but he has introduced legislation that adds significantly to the help we already give to students who agree to spend three years working for the government. The up to $40,000 that the government contributes to pay off the student's loans will not, under the Burton bill, be taxable income for the student. Now for the bad news. The Bush administration wants to take away the students' ability to consolidate their loans and to take up to 30 years to repay them on a low fixed interest rate. This was an important reform that made it possible for students to contemplate taking interesting and worthwhile jobs that didn't pay much. The administration wants to make the interest rate variable so students won't have the assurance of being locked in at a low rate and will have to worry about the possibility of much higher interest rates, meaning that they will have to look for high-paying jobs regardless of how boring or unworthy they may be.

Why don't police stop trucks and buses that are emitting clouds of black smoke, impound the vehicles, and ticket the drivers?

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GOVERNOR JEB BUSH IS FEATURED in a new television advertising campaign praising his efforts to improve Florida's public schools. Democrats are upset—and not without reason. It seems the footage for the ads was shot at a private school, and that the commercials, running in an election year, are being paid for not by the Republican Party, but by the state of Florida.

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ONE OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF the partisanship that has gripped Washington in recent years is that few members of Congress are willing to be critics of the performance of government agencies when their party is in power. An exception today is Charles Grassley, the Republican senator from Iowa, who is leading the charge to press the IRS to step up its efforts to pursue tax dodgers. "I'm amazed at the creativity of those who like being Americans but dislike their American tax obligation," says Grassley. "Since tax cheats are endlessly creative, the IRS has to be just as creative to catch the crooks." According to *The Wall Street Journal*'s John D. McKinnon, Grassley is working with Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) to push "the agency to act swiftly on offshore credit-card accounts, as well as on tax shelters promoted by Big Five accounting firms and other well-paid advisers." The result is that the number of audits began to rise last year. They still have a long way to go, however. They're barely more than one-third of the rate in 1996.

It has to be said that one of the big reasons the audit rate is low was legislation enacted by Grassley and his fellow Republicans that had the effect of discouraging the IRS's efforts to get taxpayers to comply with the law. In the *Journal*'s words, they "quickly brought IRS enforcement activity virtually to a standstill." And even as enforcement activity is increasing, it should be noted that too much of it is directed toward minor cheating on the Earned Income Tax Credit instead of going after the big-time crooks who can deprive the government of millions in the case of individual returns and of billions when corporations are involved.

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MORE GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS. This time we'll do the bad first:

Haley Barbour, a former chairman of the Republican National Committee, was paid $500,000 last year to lobby for the coal users of the electric power industry. His clients were disturbed by Bush's campaign promise to regulate the carbon dioxide emissions that are widely considered to be a major factor in global warming. Barbour, in a letter that has just come to light, wrote the White House in March 2001, "The question is whether environmental policy still prevails over energy policy with Bush-Cheney, as it did with Clinton-Gore." The letter did the trick. Bush abandoned his campaign promise and followed the wishes of Barbour and his clients.

The good news is that the administration has stuck by Clinton's proposed regulations that will by 2007 virtually eliminate pollution from the trucks and buses that use diesel fuel. The administration supported the standards in a recent case before the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, and they were upheld unanimously by the three judges who heard the case.

Other good news comes from the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, which has decided to buy 250 natural gas buses that emit much lower levels of nitrogen oxide than diesel buses. Natural gas has always seemed to me far preferable to diesel or gasoline for fleet vehicles like delivery trucks, buses, and rental cars that are used within a confined area where it is realistic to have natural gas facilities

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available. Another sensible step would be for localities to adopt ordinances that outlaw vehicles that are obviously polluting the air and authorize police to stop trucks and buses that are emitting clouds of black smoke, impound the vehicles, and ticket the drivers. I've never seen that done. Have you?

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BY THE WAY, IN MY HOME state of West Virginia, those big trucks are not only polluting the air, they're tearing up the roads. Roads meant to handle trucks weighing up to 30 or 40 tons are being pounded by giant coal trucks weighing twice as much. Of the 537 overweight trucks that inspectors caught last year, the average weight was 75 tons. Fifty-two weighed more than 85 tons. And you don't have to be very sophisticated about how often these trucks are inspected to realize how few of the offenders are actually caught.

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A FEW WEEKS AGO, WARREN Buffett predicted that nuclear terrorism is coming. Everyone wondered where he got his information. I have a clue. Warren is on the board of *The Washington Post.* Here are a couple of items from that paper: "The Department of Energy privately warned White House officials in late March that it lacked funds to adequately protect the nation's nuclear weapons research facilities ... The letter from Bruce M. Carnes warned that DOE was at 'a critical juncture' and that its safeguards and security budget were not sufficient to meet the potential terrorism challenge," report Eric Pianin and Bill Miller. "U.S. business and medical facilities have lost track of nearly 1,500 pieces [of] equipment with radioactive parts since 1996, according to a new federal accounting of radiological material that terrorism experts warn could be used in a 'dirty bomb' attack against a U.S. city," writes Joby Warrick.

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AND IF THAT'S NOT ENOUGH TO make you massage your worry beads, consider these articles from *The New York Times* about the nation's water supply. The headline from one by Elizabeth Becker says, "Big Farms Making a Mess of U.S. Waters, Cities Say." The other, by Andrew C. Revkin, reads "Federal Study Calls Spending on Water Systems Perilously Inadequate" and cites an EPA report which estimates that by 2019 "the gap between actual and necessary investment in these vital, but largely invisible, underpinnings of urbanized America is likely to exceed $650 billion." Michael Charles of the American Society of Civil Engineers explains that "a lot of these aging facilities have outlived their design life and have to be replaced." But antiquated facilities aren't the only problem. Lax oversight has led to situations like that in Milwaukee, where a local publication, *Shepherd Express*, has detailed "generally chaotic, dangerous and unhealthy workplace conditions at the Milwaukee Water Works," including "allegations that employees urinated in the purification filters."

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ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE widespread ignorance of history that I illustrated last month with *The New Yorker*'s confusion of J. Edgar Hoover with Herbert Hoover: *The New York Times'* "Week in Review" section of April 21 says, "October 5, 1965, the president [LBJ] called Robert F. Kennedy, the attorney general." The problem here is that the people of New York had elected Kennedy to the U.S. Senate in November 1964. He was a senator, not attorney general, in 1965.

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WHEN I WAS A STUDENT IN New York in the late 1940s, I rented a room in the apartment of Genevieve Gallagher Goldhurst. Tiny, as she was called, was a remarkable woman. For one thing, not many Irish Catholic girls married Jews. For another, her humor and hospitality were legendary among those of us, mostly theatrical or literary wannabes, who shared her apartment or joined her for dinner. Among the guests were the then unknown Elaine Stritch, E.L. Doctorow, and Allen Ginsberg. But the most fascinating to me was her husband Harry. They were separated, but he was a frequent visitor from his home in Charlotte, N.C., where, as Harry Golden, he ran an improbable publication called the *Carolina Israelite* and later wrote a couple of bestsellers called *Only in America* and *For Two Cents Plain.* Harry was like most of the Jews I met in those days, only more so—warm, tolerant, humane, and a liberal who shared my love for FDR. An illustration of his tolerance was that when he found out that I loved Christian hymns, a passion that most of my New York friends regarded as an embarrassing eccentricity, Harry would sing along with me. He was interested enough in his Charlotte neighbors to have actually learned the words.

I think a lot about Harry these days. He would be incredulous that there's now an organization called the Republican Jewish Coalition. He would be dismayed by tough-guy Jews like Ariel Sharon. He would understand Arabs just as he understood Gentiles like me. He would walk the last mile for peace.

Israel's hope for the future lies in its Harrys not its Sharons. Harry's commonsense wisdom would see that generosity, not never-ending retaliation, is the right way to go. Harry would understand that Israel can afford to be generous because America will never let Israel down.

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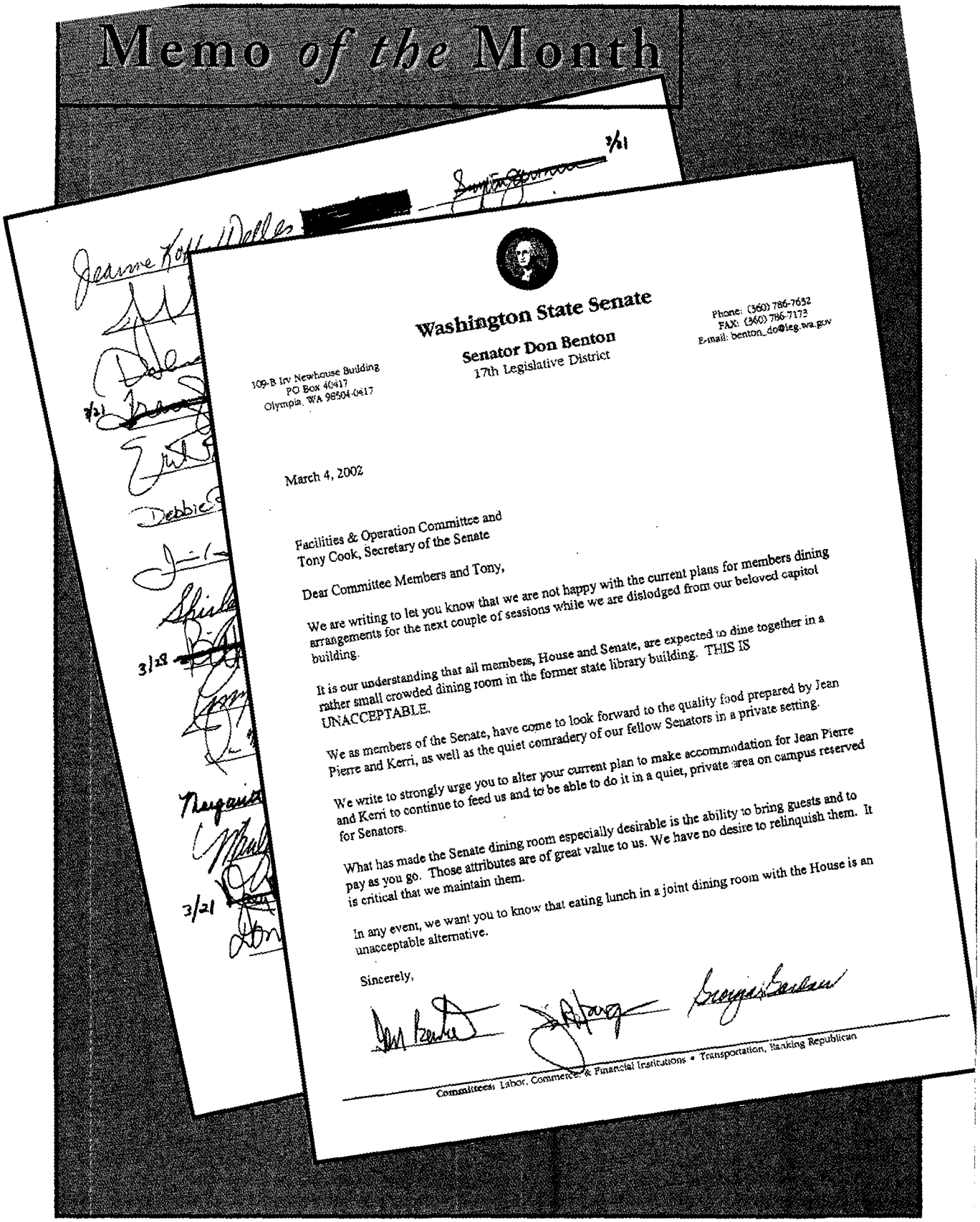
Memo *of the* Month



Washington State Senate

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March 4, 2002

Facilities & Operation Committee and
Tony Cook, Secretary of the Senate

Dear Committee Members and Tony,

We are writing to let you know that we are not happy with the current plans for members dining arrangements for the next couple of sessions while we are dislodged from our beloved capitol building.

It is our understanding that all members, House and Senate, are expected to dine together in a rather small crowded dining room in the former state library building. THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE.

We as members of the Senate, have come to look forward to the quality food prepared by Jean Pierre and Kerri, as well as the quiet comradery of our fellow Senators in a private setting.

We write to strongly urge you to alter your current plan to make accommodation for Jean Pierre and Kerri to continue to feed us and to be able to do it in a quiet, private area on campus reserved for Senators.

What has made the Senate dining room especially desirable is the ability to bring guests and to pay as you go. Those attributes are of great value to us. We have no desire to relinquish them. It is critical that we maintain them.

In any event, we want you to know that eating lunch in a joint dining room with the House is an unacceptable alternative.

Sincerely,

Committees: Labor, Commerce, & Financial Institutions • Transportation, Ranking Republican

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Pope Hopefuls

Everyone assumes that John Paul II's successor will be a conservative. Don't bet on it.

BY JOHN L. ALLEN, JR.

THE VATICAN, THE 109-ACRE INTERnational headquarters of Roman Catholicism, works at the leisurely pace of an institution that has seen it all over 2,000 years of history. This is a place that closes shop every day at 1 p.m., where decisions that might take weeks in other organizations can be "studied" for years, awaiting an "opportune" moment to be announced. It is not accustomed to working under pressure of tight deadlines, as it showed in late April, when all 13 American cardinals were summoned for a meeting with John Paul II and top Vatican officials to discuss the sexual-abuse crisis in the American church.

At only a week's notice, the speed with which the summit came together was startling. The Vatican simply does not turn on a dime like this, and hence the event signaled that business as usual wasn't cutting it. Media scrutiny from the United States was intense. Banks of satellite trucks were parked in front of the Vatican press office streaming 24/7 coverage back to the States. CNN broadcast the press briefings live and flew in its new star, Connie Chung, to cover the proceedings.

At times like these, when an institution is under unusual pressure, outsiders can sometimes catch a glimpse of the normally hidden political tensions that could decide its future. Such was the case on the second and final day of the summit. At around 9:30 p.m., the press office handed reporters a communiqué setting forth the summit's conclusions regarding the church's mishandling of priests who commit sexual abuse. Half an hour later, a contingent of U.S. cardinals and bishops stepped before the microphones to answer questions.

What quickly became clear was that American church leaders had not had sufficient time to read the hurriedly prepared document, and that a certain amount of political intrigue had gone into its drafting. The Americans on the panel, for example, had been convinced the document contained a call for greater lay involvement, including a national blue-ribbon commission to set standards and accountability procedures, and were embarrassed to find that the reference to the laity was missing. (A startled Cardinal Theodore McCarrick of Washington, D.C., flipped quickly through the text, then concluded that there must have been an "editing error.")

Most controversially, the communiqué took sides in the debate between the Catholic left and right to explain priestly sex abuse. The left views the problem in terms of mandatory clerical celibacy, the refusal to ordain women (both of which limit the pool of candidates for the priesthood), and a repressive streak toward sexuality in Catholic thought. The right sees it as an issue of doctrinal dissent and tolerance of a gay subculture in the priesthood and in Catholic seminaries.

Most American bishops, struggling to hold the church together, have avoided getting swept up in these polemics. The communiqué, however, showed no such caution. It called for a new crackdown on doctrinal dissent, and recommended a papal investigation of American seminaries, the subtext of which

JOHN L. ALLEN, JR., *Vatican correspondent for the* National Catholic Reporter, *is the author of* Conclave: The Politics, Personalities and Process of the Next Papal Election *(Doubleday).*

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was to blame gays. Afterward, it emerged that the language on dissent was inserted by two staunch theological conservatives: Cardinal Dario Castrillon Hoyos, a Colombian who heads the office for clergy, and Archbishop Tarcisio Bertone, an Italian who is the number two official in the office for doctrine. In the wake of the summit, one American cardinal has advised reporters to "forget" the communiqué, to pretend it never came out, and to focus on preparations for the June meeting of the U.S. bishops in Dallas.

The story offers two morals. First, when it comes to doctrinal questions, the architects of John Paul II's pontificate miss few opportunities to assert their conservative views. Second, there is discontent with the style and approach of this pontificate—if not its substance—even within the ranks of the cardinals.

This latter point is especially important, because the sex-abuse summit will not be the last time cardinals gather in Rome to make important decisions. It was, in fact, an anticipation of what will almost surely be the next great Vatican event: the conclave, when cardinals from all over the world gather in the Sistine Chapel to elect a successor to John Paul II.

The next pope will have to address a host of complex issues that have grown more and more contentious during John Paul II's reign. They include power distribution within Catholicism, the role of women and the laity in the church of the 21st century, the church's stance on complex bioethical questions, and its role in the process of globalization. In many parts of the Catholic world, the answers being urged by the faithful depart significantly from those offered by the leadership. How the next pope responds to these challenges will have broad consequences for secular politics and contemporary culture wars, in which the Catholic Church—the world's largest religious denomination, with one billion members—is still an important player.

There is a broad assumption in the press that the outcome of the next papal election has already been determined: Since so many of the cardinals who will elect the next pope are appointees of John Paul II (116 of 123), it is easy to conclude that his successor will be a like-minded conservative cut of the same cloth. The popular phrase is that John Paul II has "stacked the deck." Like many bits of political conventional wisdom, this idea is compelling, rational, logical ... and most probably wrong. History suggests that colleges of cardinals appointed by one pope do not elect a carbon copy as his successor. In fact, the race is wide open, and there are deep-seated political and bureaucratic reasons to expect the next Successor of St. Peter to be a moderate.

Since so many of the cardinals who will elect the next pope are appointees of John Paul II, conventional wisdom suggests his successor will be conservative—an idea that's most probably wrong.

The Pope and the Pendulum

In 1179, papal elections were placed squarely in the hands of the College of Cardinals—the better to keep lords, monarchs, and noble Roman families from manipulating the selection process, as they had done in previous centuries. To avoid infighting among the cardinals, rules specify that they must be locked up and forbidden to come out until they elect a pope. A cardinal is usually the head of a major Catholic archdiocese somewhere in the world, or the head of an agency in the Vatican. There are currently 176 cardinals worldwide, but since John Paul II's rules specify that one must be under 80 to participate in the conclave, if the election were held today only 123 could vote.

History offers plentiful examples of conclaves where the cardinals appointed by one pope elected a very different successor. The classic case is the conclave of 1958. There were 51 cardinals in that group, nearly all of them handpicked by Pope Pius XII, who is remembered today largely for the debate surrounding his alleged silence regarding the Holocaust during World War II. Toward the end of his reign he was increasingly cautious and conservative on church issues. Yet his cardinals chose John XXIII to succeed him, the pope who would later call for the Second Vatican Council (aka "Vatican II") and trigger a wave of modernization, from greater internal pluralism to replacing Gregorian chants and Latin with guitar Masses that sounded more like Peter,

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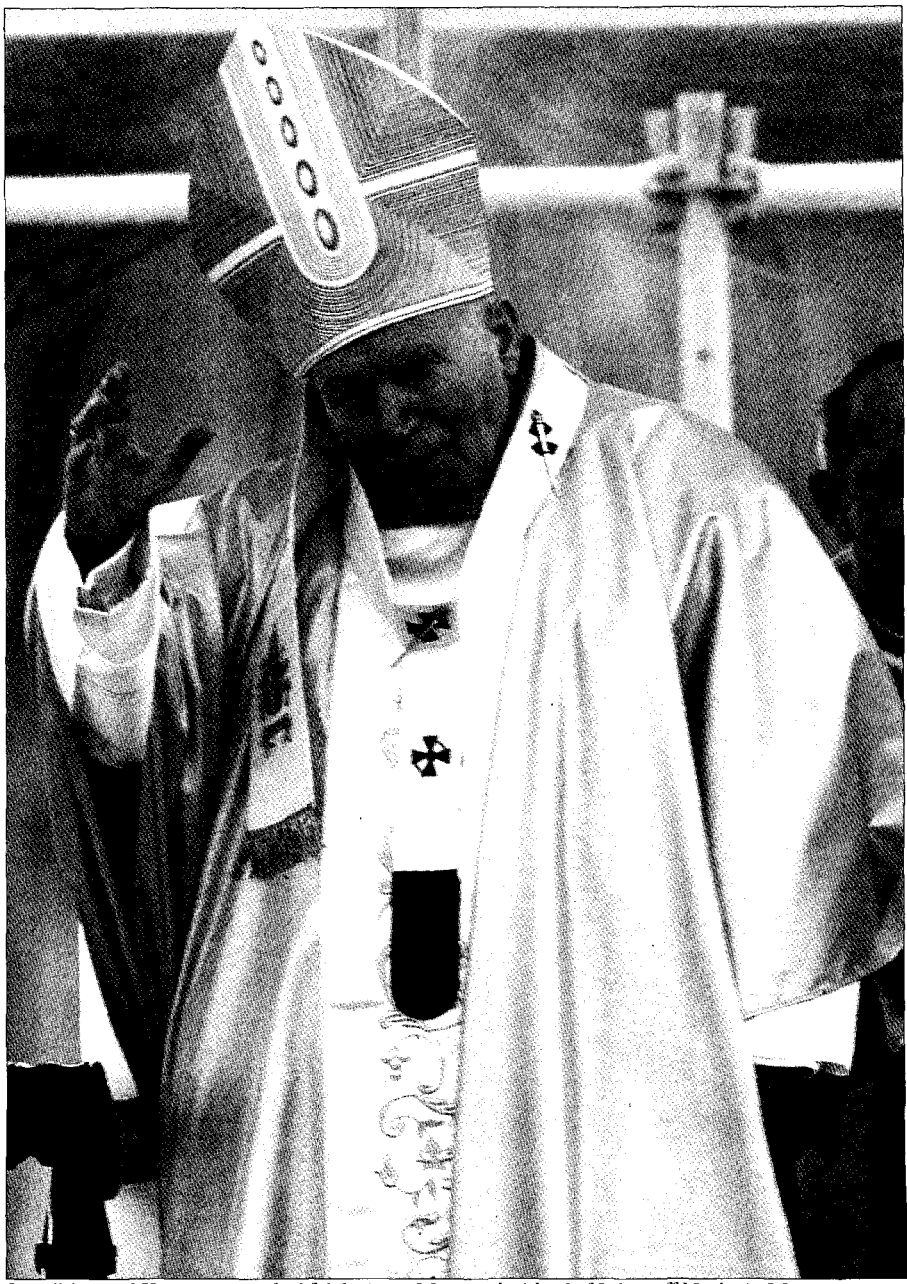
Paul, and Mary.

Two more contrasting popes than Pius XII and John XXIII would be difficult to identify. Even on a personal level they were mirror opposites. Eugenio Pacelli, who became Pius XII, was the son of ancient Roman nobility—aloof, ethereal, and quasi-divine. Angelo Roncalli, who became John XXIII, was from earthy peasant stock, constantly cracking jokes at his own expense. (A young boy once wrote him asking if he should become a policeman or pope. John XXIII counseled him to aspire to be a policeman, because there are standards one must meet. "On the other hand, anybody can become pope," he wrote. "I'm the proof.")

The conclave of 1958 is hardly the only example. If we wind the clock back to the beginning of the 20th century, we find Leo XIII occupying the papal throne. Leo, possibly the most progressive pope the Catholic Church ever elected, began the tradition of Catholic social teaching with his encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. He encouraged Catholic Biblical scholarship to catch up to what German Protestants had been doing for 100 years. And he moved the church beyond its nostalgic desire to revive the old "sacred alliance" of Catholic monarchies into a cautious détente with modern democracy.

The obvious candidate to carry forward Leo's project, and the man widely considered the obvious successor, was his secretary of state, Cardinal Mariano Rampolla, who shared Leo's progressive theological instincts. Instead, the conclave of 1903 elected Pius X, whom the Italian government had dubbed "the most intransigent of the intransigents." Pius X launched a vast crackdown against "modernism," meaning virtually every attempt to reconcile Catholic thought with the new century, silencing some theologians, excommunicating others, and setting up a network of informants to identify those entertaining unacceptable thoughts. He was, by many reckonings, the most reactionary pope of the 20th century.



Agence France Presse/Claudio Onorati

Pope John Paul II waves to the faithful during a Mass on the island of Ischia, off Naples in May 2002.

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Who did the cardinals select to succeed him in 1914? Not Pius X's key aide, but Benedict XV, the strongest anti-war pope the Catholic Church ever elected, and moderate to progressive on most theological matters.

And so it goes. Historians have a term for this back-and-forth dynamic. They call it the "pendulum law," meaning that the politics of the pope the cardinals elect tends to oscillate rather than to follow directly from the previous pontificate. Why? Because popes don't change as often as U.S. presidents do. At the end of a long papacy, there is always a sense of unfinished business, which the pope either couldn't or wouldn't address. Even cardinals who love the present pope tend to think that his approach has had a long time to work, and welcome fresh ideas. The Italians, as they always do, have a better phrase to capture this dynamic: "You always follow a fat pope with a thin one."

Third World Popes

The successor to John Paul II is, therefore, almost certain to be a different kind of man. Indeed, it is quite possible that the next pope will be more moderate on theological issues, and less authoritarian in his style of governance. The right question to ask is this: What is this pontificate's unfinished business? Where might the cardinals begin thinking about what kind of change would be most desirable under a new pope?

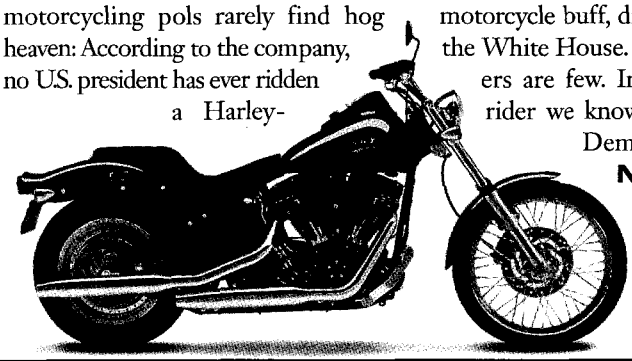
To some extent, journalists rely on private contacts with cardinals in framing answers to these questions. But we are not entirely dependent on unnamed sources, because in the last 12 months two events occurred that helped build a public record. One was a special consistory, or gathering of cardinals, in May 2001 in Rome; the second was a synod, or meeting of almost 300 bishops from all over the world, in September 2001.

In both cases, a key issue was what Catholic theologians call "collegiality," which essentially means decentralization of power. Many cardinals and bishops voiced a strong sense that there is too much power in Rome, too many centralized decisions, and that

Who's Who

BY SUSAN THREADGILL

To divine whether Sen. **John Kerry** (D-Mass.) is running for president, look no further than his garage. Kerry recently swapped his Italian-made Ducati racing motorcycle for an all-American Harley-Davidson. While it might help his populist appeal, motorcycling pols rarely find hog heaven: According to the company, no U.S. president has ever ridden a Harley-Davidson. Two weeks before the 2000 election, **Al Gore** appeared on the "**Queen Latifah** Show," to announce that as a youngster, he and **Tipper** were leather-clad motorcycle fanatics. His running mate, Sen. **Joe Lieberman** (D-Conn.), visited the Kansas City, Mo., Harley factory during the campaign, where staffers tried unsuccessfully to prevent a **Michael Dukakis**-riding-in-a-tank-style photo-op with the diminutive Democrat astride a chopper. (Lieberman not only posed, he let a factory worker take him for a spin.) Even **Jimmy Carter**, a onetime motorcycle buff, didn't last long in the White House. Republican bikers are few. In fact, the lone rider we know of was once a Dem: Sen. **Ben Nighthorse Campbell** (R-Colo.), Capitol Hill's best-known biker. Campbell favors a Harley decked out in stars and stripes, and was inducted into the National Motorcycle Museum and Hall of Fame last year. But the road hasn't been kind to him either: He fractured his right arm in a 1996 spill.



Even Republicans are tiring of Republican attack ads. In the hard-fought battle for the Senate, Sen. **Tim Johnson** (D-S.D.) is understandably miffed at ads attacking him which are funded by **Stephen Moore**, president of the arch-conservative Club for Growth. But so is Johnson's opponent, Rep. **John Thune** (R-S.D.). Thune issued a "personal plea" for Moore to "stay out of their race for the Senate." Perhaps that's because the ads are really intended to smear Senate Majority Leader **Tom Daschle** (D-S.D.), an association with whom Republicans believe will hurt Johnson. An exasperated Thune spokesperson, **Christine Iverson**, recently reiterated that the campaign "isn't interested in

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the papacy must allow local churches more freedom to craft policies and styles of life that make sense in local contexts. It was not just First World liberals making this argument, but church leaders from Brazil, South Africa, and elsewhere. Collegiality is also an issue that plays across many of the traditional left/right divides, since even conservative cardinals who support a strong papacy resent having their hands tied by Vatican micromanagers when it comes to making decisions in their own bailiwick.

One quick example will illustrate the point. The archbishop of a major Western diocese recently decided to sponsor an ecumenical service in his cathedral, which was to feature dancing. Knowing that dance in worship services is frowned upon by the Vatican, he asked his staff to clear the event with Rome. They tried for more than a week, getting no response. The archbishop eventually gave the go-ahead to publish the program. Within 24 hours, a fax arrived from Rome forbidding him to sponsor the service because it included dance. The archbishop, certainly no flaming radical, emerged from the experience convinced that something has to give in the way power is allocated and exercised in the church.

Another way the College of Cardinals traditionally thinks about what kind of change to make after a long pontificate is through the lens of geography. This, for example, is the primary factor that led them to elect Cardinal Karol Wojtyla of Cracow, Poland, in 1978. They wanted to give a shot in the arm to the suffering church behind the Iron Curtain.

In similar fashion, a number of cardinals today would like to give a boost to the suffering church amid the world's poor, which means a pope from the Third World. Latin America seems especially primed to offer the Catholic Church a pope. Almost 50 percent of Catholics today live there, and together with the cardinals from Spain and Portugal, the "Ibero-Latin American block" in the College of Cardinals represents 36 percent of the votes. (They rep-

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Moore's help."

Army Secretary **Thomas E. White** has had more comebacks than the **'69 Mets**. The latest involves the Crusader mobile artillery system, which Defense Secretary **Donald Rumsfeld** targeted for elimination, only to have anonymous Army officials—many suspect White—launch a stealth lobbying campaign through congressional supporters like Sen. **James Inhofe** (R-Okla.) and Rep. **J.C. Watts** (R-Okla.) to save it. Considering who is seeking to build the Crusader, Rumsfeld's move is quite brave. The House Armed Services Committee recently approved $475 million in funding for the weapons system, which will be directed to a subsidiary of The Carlyle Group, an investment firm whose senior staff includes **George H.W. Bush**, **James Baker**, and **Frank Carlucci**, defense secretary under **Ronald Reagan**. Like White, the Crusader could be primed for a comeback. Ask **Peter Jennings**, whose ABC News has launched a "Crusader Watch."

It's not exactly The Carlyle Group, but the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws is looking to add some muscle to its Washington lobbying effort. NORML recently enrolled entertainment celebrities **Willie Nelson**, **Robert Altman**, and **Bill Maher**. One celeb they didn't get was New York City's Republican Mayor **Michael Bloomberg**, whom the group smoked out in an April ad campaign for admitting that he'd used—and enjoyed—marijuana.

The talk radio program of **Kathleen Willey**—who made waves several years ago by alleging that **Bill Clinton** had groped her—had a shorter life than most Clinton scandals. WRVA-AM in Richmond, Va., canceled it after just four episodes, despite a guest list that included such luminaries as pollster **Dick Morris** and independent counsel **Kenneth Starr**. The station opted to get its right-wing claptrap the old-fashioned way, by airing **Dr. Laura**. Also joining the talk-radio airwaves, in Los Angeles, is former **George W. Bush** speechwriter **David "Axis of Evil" Frum.**

What does the Washington press corps think of CNN's summary (and inexplicable) firing of White House correspondent **Major Garrett**? An indication comes from **Robert Deans** of Cox Newspapers, incoming president of the White House Correspondents Association, in his opening remarks at the White House Correspondents dinner days after the firing. Noting that many people had been surprised by the decision of **Karen Hughes**, outgoing communications adviser to **George W. Bush**, to leave Washington, Deans quipped: "This is a town where a talented person can work hard, work well, succeed, and reap the rewards of that success. Just ask Major Garrett."

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resent 43 percent of the 65-and-under group, meaning their influence will grow with time.)

So, who are the Latin Americans committed to collegiality? Men such as Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga of Honduras, or Claudio Hummes of Brazil, or Juan Sandoval Íñiguez of Mexico (we might even include José da Cruz Policarpo of Portugal as part of this broad Latin American block). If one of these men were to become pope, the result would certainly not be radical doctrinal innovation. Indeed, there are no theological liberals in the College of Cardinals, at least as measured by First World standards—no one who would ordain women to the priesthood, or change the teaching on homosexuality. But what any of these men, all basically theological moderates, could provide is a more open atmosphere for debate. Much of the head-hunting that has occurred under this pontificate—the theologians who have been fired or silenced, the publishing houses that have been intimidated—would end as part of the "less government from the center" approach. This would not make for quick change on any of the disputed doctrinal or disciplinary issues, though it could pave the way for eventual reform.

It seems likely that the cardinals' push for greater collegiality will produce a pope who is less ubiquitous and globetrotting, more a symbol of unity than the CEO of Catholicism, Inc.

Moreover, all of these men are ardent advocates of social justice, and hence come across as quite progressive in the realm of secular politics. Rodriguez, for example, is one of the world's leading champions of debt relief for developing nations. In June 1999, Rodriguez and rock star Bono, from U2, joined forces at a G8 meeting to present a petition with 17 million signatures demanding debt relief. Rodriguez is also an advocate for women and improved race relations, and generally strives to be a voice of conscience within the process of globalization. The other two Latin Americans basically share this outlook, reflecting their pastoral experience of ministering to some of the most impoverished people on earth. In that sense, they are building on the progressive side of the legacy of John Paul II, who has himself been strong on human rights and a critique of "savage capitalism."

If Rodriguez, Hummes, or a man fitting the same profile were elected, the Catholic Church would have as pope a theological moderate, a decentralizer, and someone whose real passion lies in social justice issues. There is a hard-headed electoral logic that could produce such an outcome.

Of course, this result is not written in the stars. There is a strong faction of doctrinal conservatives in the College of Cardinals worried that Catholicism is being corrupted by secularism and relativism, and this faction will seek to elect a pope who is even stronger on doctrine than John Paul II. (Indeed, some right-wing critics say this pope has been strong on moral issues, such as abortion and homosexuality, but weak on doctrine. They see his penchant for calling pan-religious summits in Assisi, for example, as an unacceptable flirtation with syncretism—blending elements of different religions into one New Age mix.) Among the Latin Americans, this view is especially strong, and there are formidable candidates who would push a much more traditionalist agenda—for example, Castrillon Hoyos of Colombia.

Yet, whatever else happens, it seems likely that the push for collegiality will produce a pope who is less ubiquitous and globetrotting, more a symbol of unity than the CEO of Catholicism, Inc.

Oddly enough, we may be seeing a preview of such a papacy right now in the United States. Since the beginning of the sexual-abuse scandal, the Vatican has taken the position that the problem will have to be fixed in the United States, given its unique legal and cultural situation. After the recent summit failed to deliver the plan for action that many were expecting, Vatican officials reiterated that the real work will have to be done by the American bishops at their June meeting in Dallas.

On this issue, in other words, and against the general grain of John Paul II's pontificate, American Catholics are being told: "Look not to Rome but to yourselves." If papal candidates had bumper stickers, that might not be a bad one heading into the next conclave. ●

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In a Snob-Free Zone

Is there a place where one is outside all snobbish concerns—neither wanting to get in anywhere, nor needing to keep anyone else out?

By Joseph Epstein

By the late 1960s, the old Wasp social ascendancy in American life, after showing many cracks, was beginning to break up in earnest. The Ivy League colleges, as Nicholas Lemann has shown in *The Big Test*, had begun to turn from places where students were admitted by ancestral right into meritocratic institutions that looked to SAT tests to direct their admissions policy. The old Society page, with its news of old-family weddings, cotillions, and charity balls, began everywhere to be replaced in newspapers by the Style page, a very different thing. The Social Register became the subject of jokes. The Episcopal Church, once a bastion of Wasp life—an Episcopalian, the old joke had it, was a Presbyterian who lived on his investments—turned sentimental leftist. How many heterosexual Episcopal priests does it take to elect a bishop, a new joke asked. All three, the answer is. Soon one began to hear reports that many children of established Wasp families—Rockefellers and others—were feeling guilty about their inherited wealth, and looking for ways to redistribute it in the larger society.

The Wasp old guard put up the white flag without a shot being fired. Suddenly bars began to drop: in formerly restricted neighborhoods, in previously elite country and city clubs, in once white-shoe bank, law, and investment firms. Once-snobbish institutions loosened up, opened up, disappeared. The closest thing to an aristocracy that America had known was now most prominently in evidence in the magazine ads of a small grey-haired Jewish designer named Ralph Lauren (né Lifschitz). Perhaps the best analogy to the Wasp self-divestment of power is that of the British giving up their empire. Both may have felt that the need to do so was inevitable—and quite possibly it was—but each came away diminished, disliked, even a little despised for having done so. To this day in America, the Wasps are the one group about which—in a politically correct atmosphere—jokes can be made with impunity.

One might have thought that the steep decline, if not the complete demise, of the Wasps would have put a powerful crimp in snobbery itself. Quite the reverse. What in fact happened is that snobbery became open to everyone: One could claim an essentially snobbish superiority on the basis of one's ethnicity, one's status as a victim, one's children's achievements, one's good taste, one's with-it-ness, one's culture, one's knowledge of wine, grub, or movies. We were all free to be snobs now, and the temptation to act on newfound freedom is never all that easily resisted. Who among us, after all, doesn't, not so deep down, feel rather superior to the next person? And yet, might there be a place where one could be outside all this madness?

Illustration by La Mouche.

Joseph Epstein, *former editor of* The American Scholar, *teaches writing and literature at Northwestern University. This article was adapted from his forthcoming book,* Snobbery: The American Version *(Houghton Mifflin).*

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Envy League Graduates

Is there a snob-free zone, a place where one is outside all snobbish concerns, neither wanting to get in anywhere one isn't, nor needing to keep anyone else out for fear that one's own position will somehow seem eroded or otherwise devalued? A very small island of the favored of the gods, clearly, this snob-free zone, but how does one get there?

To be well-born is a start. To be blessed with ample talent cannot hurt. To have been fortunate in one's professional, marital, or personal life will provide a genuine boost. To have won the lottery on an $80 million payoff week would be a serious help. And the easiest way into this zone may be not to care at all, to feel no aspiration, envy, resentment, anger at social arrangements, to live contentedly within oneself and be shut off from the whole damn social racket. Yet this last, the cultivation of sublime indifference, may not be the easiest but the toughest way of all into the snob-free zone.

One might have thought that the decline of the Wasps would have put a crimp in snobbery itself. What in fact happened is that snobbery became open to everyone.

Let me attempt to draw the portrait of a man (one could do something similar for a woman) who might have a chance for a life in the snob-free zone. I would begin by placing him on the lower edge of the old upper class. The poet Robert Lowell seems to have been in this condition: a Lowell, but not one of the inner circle of Lowells—those Lowells who spoke only to Cabots, and of course, we all know the only grand party to whom the Cabots spoke. I imagine him, then, to have upper-class family connections, but not be quite of the upper class, lest he seem to share too completely in that class's dreariness and likely snobbery. He should be slightly of the upper class, in other words, but not enough to be tainted by it.

His schooling ought to be mixed, public and private. All private might make him seem too privileged, too lucky. A taste of public schools—perhaps through grade school—would show him not to have existed exclusively in cushy surroundings; it wouldn't do to make him look as if he's had too easy a ride. Having gone to public school, too, will give him a democratic touch—in a democracy, not a bad thing to have. (Paul McCartney and his wife sent their daughters to public—in the American sense of the word—schools, which could be interpreted as a brilliantly snobbish move.) He will have been a respectably good student, but not a great, off-the-boards astonishing one.

I would have him go to Andover or Groton, thence to Harvard or Princeton, and put in a year at Oxford or Cambridge, the last to Anglicize, cosmopolitanize, and polish him a bit. I don't believe any of these places is so wonderful, please understand, but the world seems to believe they are, so if our man is to enter the snob-free zone, he must do so in terms the world recognizes. Besides, having gone through such institutions, he will come to understand that the world, in its estimates, is often stupid, and never more than in recent years, when everything has begun to break down, especially in education. Having gone to what are thought very good schools, he will have taken their measure and never have to think—yearningly, in part snobbishly—as so many people seem to do, how different his life would've been had he only taken thought to have got 'a better education.' Unlike, say, poor Jay Gatsby, he will not have to falsify an educational résumé.

He'll require money. "A man may be despised," said Balzac, "but not his money." Our man doesn't have to be a billionaire, but he ought to have enough to take him out of the financial wars, so he need never do anything despicable for reasons of money alone. Being in possession of serious money—"holding," as they used to say at the racetrack—will give him freedom in other ways, not least by cutting down on his longing, which in turn reduces his susceptibility to material snobberies of various kinds, from cars to summer houses.

He will have earned his own money. At . . . what? Something for which he has an inherent skill, or a craft he learned by sedulous application of his talents: He could be an artist of some sort, possibly an architect, or maybe he has begun a business, manufacturing or selling something useful and well-made. His work gives him pleasure and no cause to believe his days misspent.

His wife, unlike him, is Jewish, a pediatrician perhaps, also happy in her work, physically attractive, a respectable money-earner, kindly, large-hearted. They have two children, a son and a daughter, good enough at school, with no known hangups or other problems or disabilities.

The family is never put to any of the tests of snobbery. They are never excluded, everywhere thought to be

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winning and always wanted; and, because so confident are they of their own quality, they have no thought of excluding anyone else. Such clubs as they join—a tennis and swimming club, for their daughter is an ardent tennis player, their son a swimmer of promise—are joined for their utility and pleasantness alone. Status is never a first, nor even a last, consideration. Such judgments as they make about persons, places, and pleasures are made on the basis of intrinsic and therefore genuine merit, never on that of being the right social, professional, or political move. Happy family, I would say, lucky family. Let us hope there are a few such in America, while remaining free to doubt it.

Yet perhaps this is all wrong, and the person who is in the snob-free zone is more likely to be a half-black, half-Hispanic man in dreadlocks who is young, bisexual, and a painter of terrifying pictures of childhood abuse, from which he is known to have suffered, but for which he is everywhere acclaimed.

I can think of a man who lived in a snob-free zone in whom snobbishness, though never justifiable, might have been understandable. He happens to have been a cousin of mine whose name was Sherwin Rosen and who was an economist at the University of Chicago. He was supposed to have been in line for the Nobel Prize in economics before he died, of lung cancer, in 2001, in his sixty-third year.

At his memorial service and at a dinner afterward, I was impressed not only by the range of people who spoke on my cousin's behalf but by their varying personal styles. None seemed particularly elegant, handsome, suave. Neither, for that matter, was my cousin. He was instead immensely winning without any of these qualities, and in part because he didn't seem to care about status at all. He enjoyed owning sporty cars—a white Audi sports coupé was his last—and drinking good wine and listening to classical pianists and playing jazz piano himself, but he made no fuss about these things. He made no fuss about anything, in fact, except economics. He judged his colleagues by their skill at their discipline, and, apart from their characters, nothing else. My guess is that he judged himself by the same criterion.

He once told me that he was offered something called an Albert Schweitzer Professorship in New York, which would have almost doubled his salary, but he said that, even though he could have used the money, he couldn't accept it. He couldn't because he needed the bruising intellectual combat that his colleagues at the University of Chicago Department of Economics gave one another. It wasn't pleasant, but, he felt, he needed it. When one of his best students did not land a job in one of the better-regarded universities, he told the student that it was a good thing, for it would take him outside all the worry about prestige and throw him back on his talent as an economist, which, if his devotion was such as to bring out his potential, would in the end result in his being made offers by better schools. Which, the student said, is exactly what happened.

My cousin Sherwin's way into the snob-free zone was simple enough: Care only about one's work, judge people only by their skill at their own work, and permit nothing else outside one's work to signify in any serious way. View the rest of the world as a more or less amusing carnival at which one happens to have earned—through, of course, one's work—a good seat. Judge all things by their intrinsic quality, and consider status a waste of time. One of the reasons I liked him so much is that he brought all this off without any contortion of his essentially kind character.

Higher Yearning

Now in my seventh decade am I, at last, anywhere near the snob-free zone? I think it fair to say that I haven't much interest in the social climb. When I think of people for whose company I yearn for, I find the majority of them no longer alive. I have a weakness—a snobbish weakness?—for people who exhibit style, but style with the strong suggestion of substance behind it. From the previous generation, I should have liked to have known Noel Coward, Audrey Hepburn, George Balanchine, Marcello Mastroianni, Vladimir Nabokov, George Marshall, Edmund Wilson (when sober), and Billy Wilder. Of people still in full career, I find that, among public figures, I admire Pierre Boulez, whom I met once and found both *haimish* and winning; Mikhail Baryshnikov, who surmounted the obstacles of being born to wretched parents in a miserable country to go on to become a prominent artist with a selfless devotion to his art; and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who seems to me not only the most talented person in political life but the only one with whom I'd care to sit down to lunch.

On the other side—people with whom I wouldn't care to sit down to lunch—I include almost all current university presidents, present members of the U.S. Congress, most contemporary writers and painters, actors, athletes, and anyone vaguely known as a socialite. I came upon 21 men and women whom Absolut Vodka featured in an ad in a recent issue of *Vanity Fair*, all photographed by Annie Leibovitz, ranging in age from the architect Philip Johnson to the choreographer Mark Morris, and including Salman Rushdie, Gore Vidal, Spike Lee, Helmut Newton, Sarah Jessica Parker, and other of the usual suspects. They were in this ad because they were supposed to be avant-garde, hip, fascinating; add

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accomplished, revered, successful. And yet I find I do not long to meet any of them. (My guess is that they can do nicely, thank you, without meeting me, but that is another matter.) I feel about them as the Jews of Russia once felt about the tsars: They should live and be well, but not too close to me.

Does my list of people I wish I had known suggest its own snobbery? Possibly. I prefer to think that I have a bias toward people whose stylishness is informed by an unpredictable but subtle point of view, fine tact, and generosity of spirit. In this line, I have always admired a man named Walter Berry, who was the head of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Paris and who shows up in the biographies of such people as Edith Wharton, Marcel Proust, and Bernard Berenson. Edith Wharton conceded that she ought to have married Walter Berry: "He had been to me in turn all that one human being can be to another, in love, in friendship, in understanding." She arranged to be buried near him in the same cemetery in Versailles. Proust immediately recognized him as a man of quality, and Berry once wrote to Proust telling him that, when asked if he had read Proust's novels, he always replied: "Yes, but they have a grave defect: they are so short."

Not yearning to go socially any higher than I am now—content, that is, with the friends I have—I am, in this regard at least, in the snob-free zone. Not so, alas, in other regards. Much as I like to think myself the democrat, I find myself doing a certain amount of snobbish looking down on, in Lyndon Johnson's all too mortal phrase, "mah felluh Amurikuns." On the Outer Drive in Chicago, I am behind a car on whose back window is a decal reading "Illinois State University." My view is that one oughtn't even to have a sticker that reads "All Souls, Oxford," but Illinois State? Of course, the thought is a perfectly snobbish one. The guy driving the car is pleased to have gone to Illinois State; maybe he, or his son or daughter, is the first person in the family to have gone to college; possibly he completed his studies at great financial sacrifice. Still, I almost reflexively look down on that decal.

I do not look down on any of the current American pariahs: cigarette smokers, the overweight, the aged, the unhealthful food eaters. I rather cherish some among them and feel sorry for others. But I do look down on certain selected people—preferably, it's true, from a distance and until now unbeknownst to them. Yet look down I do, usually with an uncomplicated feeling of satisfaction.

I am at a concert at the Ravinia Summer Music Festival, in Highland Park, on the North Shore outside Chicago. It is a Pops concert, with Erich Kunzel leading the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and a group, made up of six Englishmen, calling itself the King's Singers, since all were once at King's College, Cambridge. Normally, I shouldn't have gone to this kind of concert, but I had to miss another concert date, and in the exchange of tickets this was all that was open to me. I didn't think much of it. Listening to the great Chicago Symphony play the movie and television music of Henry Mancini felt to me like getting into a Rolls-Royce to drive around the block to take out the garbage. The King's Singers weren't much, either. Why, I wondered, am I here?

Bored, I look at the audience of which I am a part in the Ravinia pavilion. It is an older crowd, lots of comb-over hairdos among the men, a fair share of blue rinse among the women. Very suburban, I think: thick-calved younger women, men wearing pastel-colored clothes. They seem happy hearing this stuff, the musical equivalent of chewing gum, which left my mind wandering. The bloody snobbish truth is, I prefer not to think myself part of this crowd. I think myself, if you want to know, much better—intellectually superior, musically more sophisticated, even though I haven't any musical training whatsoever and cannot follow a score.

In part these feelings were justified: The music was terribly thin, leaving no residue, better listened to, if at all, while driving across town on an errand. But why did I have to establish my superiority to my (mildly) detested fellow listeners, even if only in my own mind? Why not simply note them and think about other things? Because, alas, the snob cannot bear to think himself a nobody, even in his own mind, and he certainly doesn't want to think himself included in an audience of what he sees as dull people, who have, as W. H. Auden once said to Nicholas Nabokov about a bureaucratic group in the U.S. Army, the "wrong ideas about everything and belong to that group of people neither you nor I can possibly like or condone." And rather than sit back and enjoy this concert, unmemorable as it was, I had to make plain, if only to myself, that I am a much more serious person than these people sitting around me, and serious in a way that deserves recognition, even if (again) only to myself.

Why do those thoughts play in my head at all? Why did I need to assert my superiority, even to myself, when no one was contesting it? Why cannot I, even so late in the day, grow into one of those admirable fellows—reasonable, tolerant, generous-spirited, honorable—that Jefferson called "natural aristocrats" and that a liberal arts education is supposed to form but almost never does?

Strange. And ridiculous. Snob-free zone? Haven't myself yet arrived anywhere close. Perhaps in the next life. Or possibly the one after that. ●

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Bomb Saddam?

How the obsession of a few neocon hawks became the central goal of U.S. foreign policy.

BY JOSHUA MICAH MARSHALL

IMAGINE FOR A MOMENT THAT YOU'RE President George W. Bush. At some point in the next several months you will have to decide whether to overthrow Saddam Hussein—not just to threaten and saber-rattle and hope something gives, but actually to pull the trigger on what could be a very costly and risky military venture. How precisely will you make that decision? It will almost certainly come down to a choice between which of two groups of advisers you choose to believe. One side is comprised of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, most of the career military, nearly every Middle East expert at the State Department, and the vast majority of intelligence analysts and CIA operations officers who know the region. These folks generally think that the idea of attacking Saddam is questionable at best, reckless at worst. On the other side are a few dozen neoconservative think tank scholars and defense policy intellectuals. Few of them have any serious knowledge of the Arab world, the Middle East, or Islam. Fewer still have served in the armed forces. In other words, to give the go-ahead to war with Iraq, you'd have to decide that the experienced hands are all wrong, and throw in your lot with a bunch of hot-headed ideologues. Oh, and one other thing: The last few times, the ideologues have turned out to be right.

To anyone who's followed foreign affairs for the last couple of decades, the names of the neoconservative hawks will be familiar—or, if you're a liberal, chilling. Their *éminence grise* is Richard Perle, who serves simultaneously as a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and chairman of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board, a heretofore somnolent committee of foreign policy old-timers that Perle has refashioned into a key advisory group. Of all the hawks, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz probably has the most powerful job inside the Bush administration. A dozen others hold key posts at the State Department and the White House. Most are acolytes of Perle, and also Jewish, passionately pro-Israel, and pro-Likud. And all are united by a shared idea: that America should be unafraid to use its military power early and often to advance its interests and values. It is an idea that infuriates most members of the national security establishment at the Pentagon, State, and the CIA, who believe that America's military force should be used rarely and only as a last resort, preferably in concert with allies.

The neocons have been clashing with the establishment since the 1970s. Back then, the consensus view among foreign policy elites was that the Cold War was an indefinite or perhaps even a permanent fact of world politics, to be managed with diplomacy and nuclear deterrence. The neocons argued for deliberately tipping the balance of power in America's direction. Ronald Reagan championed their ideas, and brought a number of neocons into his administration, including Perle and Wolfowitz. Reagan's huge defense buildup and harsh, even provocative, rhetoric contributed significantly to running the Soviet military-industrial complex into the ground. The president went for the Hail Mary pass—whatever the dangers—and it worked.

During the Gulf War, the hawks urged President George H.W. Bush to ignore the limits of his U.N. mandate, roll the tanks into Baghdad, and bring down Saddam Hussein's regime. Bush sided with the then-

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chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Colin Powell (the embodiment of the establishment, who had advised Bush against liberating Kuwait), and left Saddam in power. The neocons have been saying *I told you so* ever since.

In the 1990s, as the Balkans descended into civil war, this same establishment urged President Clinton to proceed with caution. After several years of carnage, Clinton finally broke with the experts and launched air strikes against Bosnia, then Kosovo. Many conservative Republicans criticized Clinton at the time, but the neocons, despite their loathing for the president, supported his efforts. And rightly so: American action ended the bloodshed and brought stability to a key region of Europe with practically no loss of American life.

The hawks have a much better argument for attacking Iraq than many people imagine. But they're the last people who should be in charge of carrying it out.

Again and again, for more than two decades, the neocon hawks have called it right. But they've gotten a lot wrong, too. Back in the 1970s and early 1980s, they portrayed the U.S.S.R. as a menacing giant about to overwhelm us, when in fact—we now know—it was already headed for collapse, and its downfall had more to do with its own terminal rot than anything America did. They cheered on (and in some cases aided) bloody proxy wars in Central America and Africa that did little to hasten the Soviets' demise, but plenty to brutalize entire populations and tarnish America's image abroad. Neocons led the successful effort to kill Bush senior's policy, fashioned by the establishment, of conditioning U.S. aid to Israel on freezing expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank—a policy that seems, in the wake of recent bloodshed in the Middle East, visionary. Even on Iraq the neocons' record has been marred by errors of judgment and manifest recklessness and dishonesty. Their favored means of toppling Saddam is a CIA-created opposition leader, Ahmed Chalabi, a glib exile who hasn't lived in Iraq since he was a teenager and has no discernable support, let alone control over armed forces, inside the country. In the aftermath of September 11, neocons repeatedly tried to tie Saddam to either the World Trade Center attacks or the anthrax mailings. The evidence for such a connection was always slight to nonexistent, which they understood. But they made the argument anyway. That's how they operate.

While arguments for and against invading Iraq continue, preparations for an attack are well underway. The Pentagon is moving troops and armaments to U.S.-allied Arab emirates that ring the Persian Gulf. The State Department is getting serious about organizing and uniting the Iraqi opposition. Diplomats are discussing with allies like Turkey and Kuwait the role they would play in a U.S. attack. There is talk of a military assault on Iraq as early as this winter, though a more likely target date is 12 to 18 months from now. (With victory scheduled in time for the '04 elections? Perish the thought!) Whatever the date, some kind of war seems increasingly certain—and probably wise, for the hawks have a much better argument for attacking Iraq than many people imagine. But with their peculiar mix of strategic vision, recklessness, and intellectual dishonesty, they're the last people who should be in charge of carrying it out.

Mission Impossible?

Deciding whether or not we should topple Saddam raises a number of questions that we are in a painfully poor position to answer. How close is Saddam to having weapons of mass destruction? How long will our deterrents hold him in check? How resilient would his regime be against sustained military force? And, perhaps most important, what geopolitical collateral damage would result, even if we were successful? Anyone who claims to have the answers is either a liar or a fool.

Frank Anderson is neither. As the former chief of the Near East division of the CIA's Directorate of Operations (which runs the agency's clandestine efforts), he is a certified member of the national security establishment. When asked a question, he pauses, sorting through the many complexities, before giving an answer that is balanced, hedged, and honest. Anderson told me that Saddam could probably be deterred from using weapons of mass destruction should he acquire them. "He probably will be further along the way to having a weapon of massive destruction. [But] I think it's highly unlikely that we'll be telling the story of 'and he used it.' The bad news is

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that if I'm wrong, I'm wrong big time." Anderson worries about the neocons' readiness to employ cowboy tactics to bring down Saddam, a concern evidently rooted in his own experience running clandestine operations—and witnessing how often things go awry.

Richard Perle could not be more different. Dubbed the "Prince of Darkness" during the Reagan years for his hatred of the Soviets and his eagerness to confront them, he radiates a cool, effortless intelligence which is both cocky and oracular. He doesn't know many of the details about Iraq or the Middle East. But, he works you like a used car salesman, avoiding questions he'd prefer not to or cannot answer, responding to uncomfortable queries (what if Saddam's Republican Guards stay loyal to him and fight?) with best case scenarios (don't worry, they won't). When asked what would happen if America encountered an embittered civilian population after fighting a grisly battle for Baghdad, Perle replied with a question: "Suppose the Iraqis are dancing in the streets after Saddam is gone?" His arguments tend to rest on abstractions and mechanistic reasoning: *Saddam is bad. Ergo the Iraqis hate Saddam. Ergo they like us.* That might be true. But if such arguments were chairs you would hear them creaking beneath you.

Perle's case for invading Iraq, which mirrors that of other hawks, is basically an escalating series of true or false propositions that leads inexorably toward massive military confrontation: Do you believe that Saddam Hussein is an evil tyrant who would use weapons of mass destruction against us or our allies if he got them? *Check.* Do you believe he is trying to acquire nuclear or biological weapons and the means to deliver them? *Check.* If so, doesn't it stand to reason that he will eventually succeed in getting them? *Check.* Aren't we then obligated to stop him? *Check!* Sooner, rather than later? *Check!!*

The trouble is that this is a syllogism—one conspicuously short on details about Iraq, geopolitics, or anything else. And yet the logic is still pretty compelling, an impression that only grows when you talk to his critics. While they can point to an endless number of pitfalls and hurdles that the hawks either gloss over or ignore, they're less able to break apart the tight chain of reasoning that gets the hawks on their war footing.

Judith Yaphe, for one, a career CIA intelligence analyst now at the National Defense University in Washington, D.C., thinks the costs of attacking Saddam probably outweigh the benefits. But when I asked her whether Saddam was as dangerous as the hawks maintain, her reply was not so different from theirs. "I'm of the school that says this guy had better never have [weapons of mass destruction] because I don't know what he'd do. You can't ignore him," she told me. "[Costs aside] you've gotta take him out because if you don't you're going to have to continue to live with this festering wound and I don't have much confidence that it can be done short of something significant. I don't think that you just rely on a little covert action. This isn't *Mission Impossible*." In other words, Yaphe's underlying assumptions about Saddam are not

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Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz

so different from those of the hawks. She's just better informed and more cautious.

Boxing Saddam

Since the end of the Gulf War, U.S. policy on Iraq has been premised on two notions. First, that we would never again accept Saddam Hussein's regime as just another player in the international state system. Second, that Saddam was trying to develop weapons of mass destruction and that we could not, and would not, let him do so. In the early 1990s, we quite reasonably assumed his regime could not last long in the face of his loss of Kuwait and heavy international economic sanctions—an assumption, of course, that proved entirely wrong. In the mid-1990s, the U.S. was preoccupied with the Middle Eastern peace process and the Balkans. It's easy to second guess America's inattention to Iraq, as the hawks do. But at the time, these issues *were* more pressing. And as long as the UNSCOM inspectors remained in Iraq and Saddam could be sufficiently prevented from procuring weapons of mass destruction, the status quo seemed tenable. The strategy of keeping Saddam "in a box," as Clinton officials liked to put it, made sense.

But as early as 1996 and 1997, this was no longer clearly true. Saddam's regime was thriving under sanctions, even as his people suffered under them (a condition he could have alleviated, but didn't). As their condition deteriorated, so too did the U.N. Security Council's support for maintaining the U.S.-backed sanctions. We were in the box now just as much as Saddam was. And time was on his side, not ours.

In late 1998, the other shoe finally dropped: Iraq expelled UNSCOM weapons inspectors. The U.S. and Great Britain responded with a thunderous four-day bombardment of cruise missiles and air strikes—Operation Desert Fox. But when the bombing was over, the inspectors were still gone and have never returned. From that point on, U.S. policy was at war with itself. There were (and are) only two real options: to accept Saddam as a regional power (and thus to risk having his weapons and control of oil dictate terms in the Middle East and elsewhere), or take him out.

Hawk Heaven

The hawks began pressing the case for overthrowing Saddam in 1998 with a letter to the Clinton administration drafted by Perle and signed by 40 neocon luminaries. Many of the signatories became advisers to then-Gov. George W. Bush. Some won top jobs in the new administration. Hawks include, at the Pentagon, Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith, William Luti, and Harold Rhode; at the Office of the Vice President, Lewis "Scooter" Libby and John Hannah; at the State Department, David Wurmser; and at the National Security Council, former Gen. Wayne Downing.

The hawks came in wanting to put regime change at or near the top of the Bush administration's foreign policy agenda. What they didn't figure on was how much of a hurdle Colin Powell, and his deputy, Richard Armitage, would present (despite Armitage's having signed Perle's '98 manifesto). In bureaucratic battles over the summer of 2001, Powell and Armitage made sure that "regime change," though nominally administration policy, lacked teeth.

All of that changed after September 11. Suddenly the prospect of Saddam slipping a dirty bomb to terrorists to blow up in, say, Milwaukee, didn't seem so far-fetched. It also became clear that our efforts to contain Saddam—sanctions that wound up hurting Iraqi civilians, U.S. troops on Saudi soil—were ideal recruitment tools for Osama bin Laden. Removing Saddam was back at the top of the administration's agenda. There was even talk, briefly, of launching an attack on Iraq prior to moving against Afghanistan. Cooler heads prevailed. But by last winter, the Bush administration had come around, with the State Department securely—if reluctantly—on board.

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This presented a question that most hawks had not seriously considered. Namely, *how* exactly to bring down Saddam. The war in Afghanistan offered a compelling model. With a combination of precision assault from the air, special forces on the ground, and the aid of local insurgents ready to do some of the heavy lifting, the U.S. broke the Taliban with surprising ease. In fact, the Afghan campaign bore a striking resemblance to a plan that Iraq hawks had been pitching to Washington for several years: Arm the Iraqi opposition and let them advance on Saddam under cover of U.S. air power. This plan no longer seemed so far-fetched. It didn't require the lengthy pre-positioning of forces that the Joint Chiefs demanded. And it allowed for quick action, before the anger and intensity of September 11 faded.

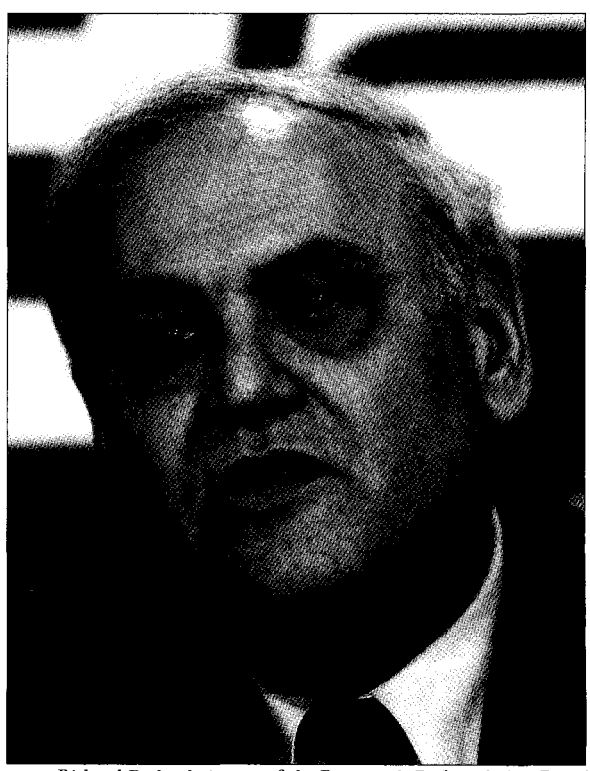
But the closer officials and military experts looked at the plans that the hawks put forward, the more holes they found. For while the hawks possess a real talent for crafting bold theories, the same cannot be said for their ability to execute in the real world. A striking example on the diplomatic front was their strategy, eagerly adopted by the president, of not engaging in peace efforts between Israel and the Palestinians. Such efforts, the hawks reasoned, were not worth the political capital and would only detract from bigger priorities like bringing down Saddam. The result, however, is that the U.S. was not there to keep the violence from spinning out of control. The fallout from the bloodletting has almost certainly delayed the war with Iraq that the hawks had hoped to be waging by now.

Getting to Know the General

Despite stark disagreements within the administration about the costs and benefits of toppling Saddam's regime, both sides agree on some key points about how a military campaign would unfold. Much of northern Iraq is already controlled by the Kurds, who have some 70,000 armed and trained paramilitaries and are wholly beyond Saddam's authority. southern Iraq has a restive but unarmed Shi'a population held in check by garrisons of some of the regime's least reliable troops. Any invasion would require a substantial number of U.S. ground troops in the south. But even staunch critics believe that the United States would quickly roll up the north and the south of the country with relative ease and few casualties. Then the U.S. forces would move toward Baghdad and its environs—and that's where the agreement breaks down.

Most of Saddam's elite Republican Guard and key military installations would be in and around Baghdad and his nearby hometown of Tikrit. The hawks assume that when U.S. troops converge on Baghdad, few of these troops would choose to go down with the regime. Most would defect or simply flee.

Again, the hawks may be right. Recently, I sat down with Najib Salhi, an Iraqi general who defected in 1995 and now heads the Iraqi Free Officers Movement. Salhi has been living in the Washington area since 2001 and like many exiles in recent months he is, in effect, auditioning for the coveted role as Washington's favored exile leader. Salhi insists that Saddam's regime is far weaker than we imagine. This is not a surprising statement coming from an exile eager for United States. support. But Salhi added something that did surprise me. One source of Saddam's strength, he says, is that he has convinced many in the Republican Guard and his inner circle that the U.S. doesn't really want him gone. "Don't worry about what you see on TV," Salhi described Saddam as saying. "I have a special relationship with the U.S. I am very strong with them. They want me to stay as leader of Iraq. I am like a buffer zone between the Arabian countries and Iran. I have to contain Iran. Iran is Shi'a and extremist. I have to contain them. I have been told to attack other Arab countries and keep them in their place. Just ignore what you see on TV and in the media."



Richard Perle, chairman of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board

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One need not believe Saddam's story, or even Salhi's, to see that the United States has, over the years, given such mixed messages to potential plotters in Saddam's ranks that they might reasonably conclude that the United States really hasn't decided whether it wants him there or not. If, however, we were to act boldly to remove him, Saddam's military could well abandon him in droves before the fighting got too heavy.

But what if that didn't happen? What if Saddam's troops remained loyal? Perle didn't have an entirely satisfactory answer to this point. Instead, he insisted that without access to his ports, and the ability to sell his oil, Saddam would not be able to hunker down in Baghdad: "I think we can put him in a situation where he's got to try to assert authority over his own territory. And when he does, he's highly vulnerable, his forces are highly vulnerable."

The neocon hawks see toppling Saddam as the first domino to fall, with other corrupt Middle Eastern regimes following—just as the fall of the Berlin Wall was followed by the collapse of communism.

The problem with this reasoning is that it assumes Saddam would court his own destruction on the least favorable terms. Would Saddam send his outnumbered Republican Guard out into the open to be annihilated by American airpower? Or would he hold them back in his redoubts in Baghdad, place his soldiers and heavy artillery among civilians, and dare the United States to come in and dislodge him?

This sort of ugly, worst-case scenario is precisely what the professional military fears and insists on preparing for. In an attack on a metropolis like Baghdad, the U.S. could have far less of the advantages of its high-tech military and precision-guided bombs. If the Iraqi army were spread throughout the city, the toll of civilian casualties would simply be too high to destroy the Iraqi military from the air. Going in with the sort of overwhelming power that the professional military envisions is actually the only strategy that would make Perle's waiting-game scenario feasible. If the U.S. invaded and bottled up Saddam and a portion of the Republican Guard in Baghdad, war planners could then survey the rest of the country and gauge the reaction of the civilian population. If it was generally positive (or at least quiescent) we could likely hold back and wait them out. But if one of the darker scenarios began to unfold—a restive civilian population, a Kurdish declaration of independence, an Iranian mobilization to the east—then we would have to choke off resistance fast. Rather than go in with relatively few troops—as the hawks propose—and risk being drawn into a volatile and dangerous waiting game outside Baghdad, the professional military wants to go in with overwhelming force —at least 200,000 troops—to do whatever is required in Baghdad rapidly, and on our terms. Many lives would certainly still be lost; but there would be fewer Iraqi civilians and American GIs among them. Equally important, moving in with overwhelming force would make a quick American victory a near certainty, greatly increasing the odds that the Iraqi army would remove Saddam before a final assault became necessary.

Part of this difference of opinion stems from the starkly different concepts of warfare held by the hawks and the military. Hawks envision a quicker, more agile, make-it-up-on-the-fly model of warfare—one which actually showed itself rather well in Afghanistan. Simply put, they don't subscribe to the Powell Doctrine. But that's not all that's in play. The hawks' first priority is not how it is done or even that it is done right—it is ensuring that the opportunity to finish off Saddam does not, once again, slip away. More than anything else, they are animated by the desire to get America into the fight and committed, even if that means doing so without the full commitment of manpower and military hardware that may eventually prove necessary or fully apprising the American people of what they may be getting into. And that is what has the uniformed services nervous: that the civilians at the Pentagon and the White House may bow to the hawks' wishes and attempt to do this on the cheap. "The fear that a lot of us have is that a really honest debate is not being conducted," says a recently retired career officer with experience working the Iraq file. "There's a sense among a number of us that the American public doesn't understand the party they're being invited to. This is going to cost big bucks. There's going to be lots of bad things

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going to happen. A lot of terrible things you're going to see on TV."

Hope Is Not A Plan

Another terrible thing critics worry about is that attacking Saddam might rattle Arab populations in nearby countries, to the point where regimes in Egypt, Jordan, or Saudi Arabia could fall. The hawks insist that any instability will be fleeting and easily weathered, and that a demonstration of American resolve will firm up wobbly allies. Again, we are in best-case-scenario land here. Press the point further, and the hawks do a clever bit of intellectual jujitsu, insisting that it would be a *good thing* if the repressive governments of Egypt or Saudi Arabia fell. "Mubarak is no great shakes," says Perle of the Egyptian president. "Surely we can do better than Mubarak." I put the same question to Perle's colleague from the Reagan administration and fellow hawk, Ken Adelman. Did he think wobbly or upended regimes in Egypt and Saudi Arabia were worth the price of removing Saddam? "All the better if you ask me."

These neoconservatives are not just being glib. They see toppling Saddam as the first domino to fall, with other corrupt Middle Eastern regimes following—just as the fall of the Berlin Wall was followed by the collapse of communism.

Here, as in so many other cases, the hawks have an amazing vision, but a deeply flawed grasp of how to act operationally and in the moment. It may not be in our long-term interests to ally ourselves with corrupt authoritarian governments in the Arab world. But it's quite possible that these governments, which are at least nominal allies of the U.S., will be replaced by corrupt authoritarian regimes that hate us. Moreover, the U.S. military understandably does not want Saudi Arabia disintegrating at its rear while it's in the midst of an operation in Iraq.

What the national security establishment does want is for the other Middle East regimes to be brought in as part of the anti-Saddam alliance. The hawks scorn such coalition building as a brake on our ability to act with moral clarity and decision. *We're right and we don't need anyone else's permission*, is the underlying mindset. But combining an intense diplomatic effort with military action is not about getting other countries' permission. It's about covering your flanks. One of the reasons American force worked in Kosovo in 1999 is that the U.S. had Slobodan Milosevic cornered not only militarily but diplomatically. He had no one to turn to, to play off against us. Given the state of opinion in the Arab world today, we probably cannot expect open support from the Saudis or the Egyptians or other frontline Arab states. But we do need an understanding with them because we cannot afford to see Crown Prince Abdullah materialize in Baghdad with a "peace plan" just as we are readying our assault.

The same goes for the State Department's efforts to get weapons inspectors back into Iraq. The hawks tend to view weapons inspections as a contemptible joke, a half-measure that will bog us down with kibitzing at the U.N. and rob us of our justification for invasion. Properly done, however, inspections are not a way to avoid war but to build the ground work for it. Before a single soldier hits the ground in Iraq, the U.S. should demand a virtually air-tight inspection regime—not the half-measures the U.N. is currently negotiating with Saddam. Our European allies would oppose this strenuously, as will Russia and China. But it is well worth drawing them into that conversation, because the force and logic of our argument is quite strong. Once the concept of inspections is granted, the need to make them effective is difficult to refute. If Saddam were to accept a truly robust inspections regime—one which would allow the inspectors to roam the country more or less at will—we will have achieved our aim of neutralizing the threat of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. But, of course, when he doesn't agree—and he won't—then we will have forced our allies to confront the reality of Iraqi intransigence head-on. Some may still oppose our imminent military action. But others might join us, and that will make us stronger.

Taking our time, deploying large numbers of troops and weaponry, working the diplomatic channels, defusing possible sources of opposition from European states and the Arab world, all will help accomplish another aim. It will telegraph our seriousness, and by so doing increase the chance that domestic forces will overthrow (or at least weaken) Saddam before our soldiers even have to begin an attack.

It's difficult to imagine that the establishment and national security bureaucracies would have brought us to our current and correct focus on Iraq. But it's even more clear that the hawks' record of breezy planning, reckless prediction, and indifferent fidelity to the truth makes them unfit to be the ones in control of how the job gets done. The hawks have a vision. But as the folks in uniform are so fond of saying, "Hope is not a plan." Getting rid of Saddam really is necessary. But it has to be done right. So, Mr. President, when the time comes for you to make a decision about Iraq, talk with Paul Wolfowitz and let him tell you what the goal should be. Escort him to the door and lock it behind you. Then sit down for a serious talk with Colin Powell. ●

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The Trouble With Frida Kahlo

Uncomfortable truths about this season's hottest female artist.

BY STEPHANIE MENCIMER

IF ONLY I HAD BEEN BORN A DECADE OR two later. As a 6th grader in 1981, instead of enduring taunts about my emerging mustache, I could have found myself in high style, mocking those poor stylish Hollywood blondes who are now struggling to grow peach fuzz as they mimic the style of the late Mexican painter-cum-icon Frida Kahlo, who was so proud of her luxurious facial hair that she painted it right on to her self-portraits. My self-esteem could have been bolstered by any number of Frida storybooks, paper dolls, and art kits now available for millennial children in need of a unibrowed role model. Thanks to an extraordinarily enduring run of "Fridamania," the mustache and the unibrow have become vogue—particularly among museum-goers visiting a recent exhibit of Kahlo's paintings (along with those of Georgia O'Keeffe and Emily Carr) at Washington's National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA). Sporting their own unibrows, they leave with new Frida totebags full of Frida memorabilia: Frida watches, the "martyr mouse pad," dolls, full-length wall hangings, books, pocketbook mirrors, photo boxes, and dressing screens.

Never has a woman with a mustache been so revered—or so marketed—as Frida Kahlo. Like a female Ché Guevara, she has become a cottage industry. In the past year, Volvo has used her self-portraits to sell cars to Hispanics, the U.S. Postal Service put her on a stamp, and *Time* magazine put her on its cover. There have been Frida look-alike contests, Frida operas, plays, documentaries, novels, a cookbook, and now, an English-language movie. Mexican beauty Salma Hayek recently debuted as Frida at the Cannes film festival (reportedly playing the role mustachioed, despite protests from Hollywood). Hayek, who wrestled the role away from Madonna and Jennifer Lopez, will join a star-studded cast that includes Latin Lothario Antonio Banderas.

The Kahlo cult has been well documented since it first emerged in the early 1990s. Back then, the artist was making headlines because her paintings were breaking records, fetching up to $1 million at auction, thanks in no small part to Madonna, an avid collector who claims to "identify with her pain and her sadness." Today, those paintings have wildly surpassed that mark, breaking $10 million—a price that puts Kahlo in a league with Picasso, Pollock, and Warhol.

What looked like a fad a decade ago has only grown stronger as Kahlo has been embraced as a poster child for every possible politically correct cause. By 1998, *Cosmopolitan* magazine was urging women to read Kahlo's biography as one of 10 ways to "celebrate National Women's Month." In a new book of essays celebrating resistance to the evils of global capitalism, John Berger writes an homage to Kahlo saying, "That she became a world legend is in part due to the fact that ... under the new world order, the sharing of pain is one of the essential preconditions for a refinding of dignity and hope."

The fledgling NMWA has broken all box-office records with its recent show, drawing more than 28,000 visitors, in large part due to the Kahlo pilgrims. Susan Fisher Sterling, NMWA's chief curator, says "Each group seems to find some validation in Kahlo. In some ways we're obsessed with ourselves and sexuality. Kahlo

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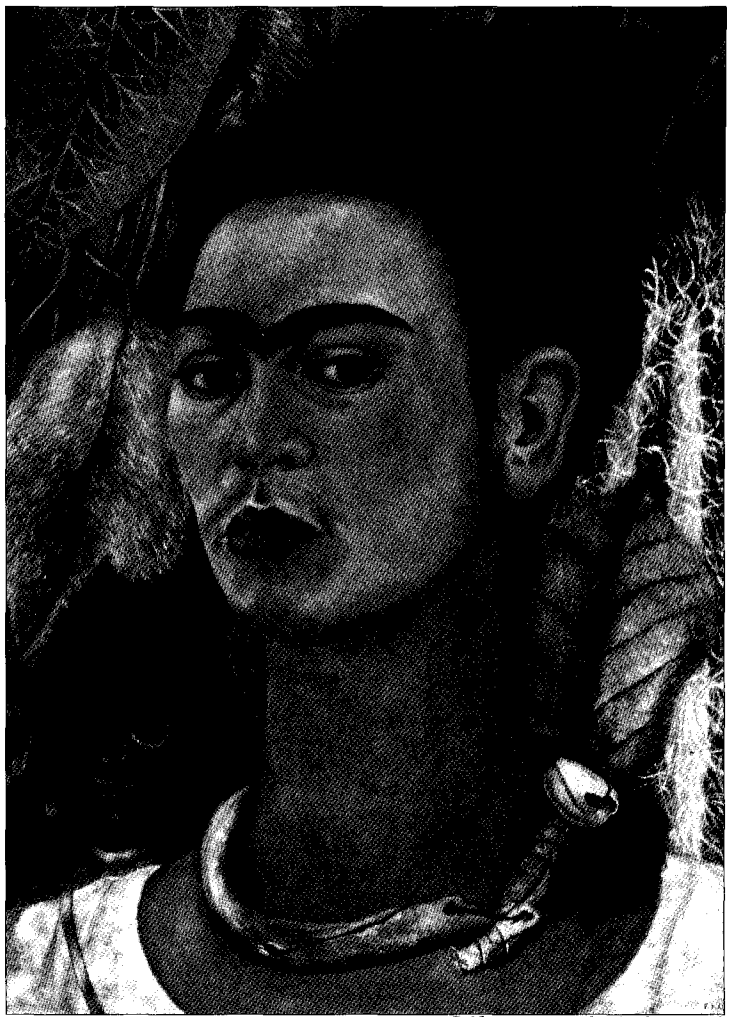
was very much a part of that narcissistic body culture."

Kahlo's art is to painting what the memoir is to literature—self-absorbed, confessional, and hard to dismiss as a flash in the pan. "Frida Kahlo has been the right artist at the right time," says Gregorio Luke, director of the Museum of Latin American Art (MoLAA) in California.

Feminists might celebrate Kahlo's ascent to greatness—if only her fame were related to her art. Instead, her fans are largely drawn by the story of her life, for which her paintings are often presented as simple illustration. Fridamaniacs are inspired by Kahlo's tragic tale of physical suffering—polio at six, grisly accident at 18—and fascinated with her glamorous friends and lovers, among them photographer and Soviet spy Tina Modotti and Leon Trotsky. It's the stuff that drives Hollywood, and the kind of story that has become *de rigueur* for entering the pantheon of "great" artists.

But, like a game of telephone, the more Kahlo's story has been told, the more it has been distorted, omitting uncomfortable details that show her to be a far more complex and flawed figure than the movies and cookbooks suggest. This elevation of the artist over the art diminishes the public understanding of Kahlo's place in history and overshadows the deeper and more disturbing truths in her work. Even more troubling, though, is that by airbrushing her biography, Kahlo's promoters have set her up for the inevitable fall so typical of women artists, that time when the contrarians will band together and take sport in shooting down her inflated image, and with it, her art.



Self-Portrait with Monkey, 1938

Entering the Boy's Club

The inflation of the artist over the art is certainly not unique to Kahlo. As the old saying goes, there is no great art, only great artists. Art history has focused on the personalities of the artist as far back as 1435, and even more so after the arrival of Caravaggio, who was forced to flee Rome in 1606 after stabbing a young man to death in a dispute over a tennis score. Caravaggio helped cement the romantic ideal of the artist as troubled rogue and bohemian who flouts the norms of polite society. That artistic tradition has made good fodder for screenwriters; the lives of Jackson Pollock, Jean-Michel Basquiat, van Gogh, and Michelangelo have all been immortalized on film. Implicit, too, in these biopics is the notion that artists must suffer to experience the deep emotion that infuses their art. "The story of great artists is that they suffer during their lives and then their art is recognized as great after their death," says Margaret Lindauer, professor at Arizona State University and author of *Devouring Frida: The Art History and Popular Celebrity of Frida Kahlo.*

Until the 1970s, though, there were almost no "great" women artists, and virtually no literature describing where and how they might have fit into the history of Western art. As the feminist movement gathered steam, women sought to rectify that problem, but it was a difficult project. Historically, women's limited opportunities meant there were few women artists to begin with, and even fewer whose work had been collected and could be definitively attributed to them.

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(Male artists and scholars have, over the centuries, made a habit of appropriating the work of talented women or attributing it to men.) Once scholars did identify significant women artists, they had to demonstrate that those artists met the male standards for admission to the canon—i.e., they had to suffer and be mostly ignored during their lifetimes. This being the male canon, it was also helpful if the emerging female artists were beautiful and had glamorous friends.

Kahlo made a perfect candidate. She didn't lop off an ear, but Kahlo had a horrific story. In 1925, when she was 18, she was riding a bus in Mexico City when it was struck by a trolley car. A metal handrail pierced her abdomen, exiting through her vagina. Her spinal column was broken in three places. Her collarbone, some ribs, and her pelvis were broken, and her right leg was fractured in 11 places. Her foot was dislocated and crushed. No one thought she would live, much less walk again, but, after a month in the hospital, she went home. Encased for months in plaster body casts, Kahlo began to paint lying in bed with a special easel rigged up by her mother. With the help of a mirror, Kahlo began painting her trademark subject: herself. Of the 150 or so of her works that have survived, most are self-portraits. As she later said, "I paint myself because I am so often alone, because I am the subject I know best."

As if her bodily injuries weren't compelling enough, Kahlo's drama—as well as her art—was enhanced by what she referred to as the second accident in her life: Diego Rivera, the famous Mexican muralist to whom she was married for 25 years. Rivera was a notorious womanizer, a habit he did not abandon after marrying Kahlo, his third wife. Legend has it that for American women traveling to Mexico, having sex with Rivera was considered as essential as visiting Tenochtitlan. The 300-pound Rivera even had an affair with Kahlo's sister Christina. (Kahlo, in turn, had her own affairs with men and women.)

Both Kahlo and Rivera were active in the Communist Party and Mexican politics. More importantly, when Kahlo met Rivera, he was a leading proponent of a post-revolutionary movement known as *Mexicanidad*, which rejected Western European influences and the "easel art" of the aristocracy in favor of all things considered "authentically" Mexican, such as peasant handicrafts and pre-Columbian art. Kahlo also became a diehard adherent, adopting her now-famous traditional Mexican costumes—long skirts and dresses, which also had the practical effect of covering up her polio-withered leg. Rejecting, too, conventional standards of beauty, Kahlo not only didn't pluck her unibrow or mustache, she groomed them with special tools and even penciled them darker.

Likewise, her paintings, rooted in 19th-century Mexican portraiture, ingeniously incorporated elements of Mexican pop culture and pre-Columbian primitivism that, in the 1930s, had never been done before. Usually small, intimate paintings that contrasted with the grand mural tradition of her time, her work was often done on sheet metal rather than canvas, in the style of Mexican street artists who painted *retablos*, or small votive paintings that offer thanks to the Virgin Mary or a saint for a miraculous deliverance from misfortune.

The paintings often reflect her tumultuous relationship with Rivera, as well as the anguish of her ever-

Sun and Life, 1947

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deteriorating health. Between the time of her accident and her death, Kahlo had more than 30 surgeries, and a gangrenous leg was eventually amputated. She dramatized the pain in her paintings, while carefully cultivating a self-image as a "heroic sufferer."

While Rivera was painting murals at the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1932, Kahlo had a miscarriage, which prompted her to paint some of the most gruesome of the self-portraits that later sealed her reputation as one of the most original painters of her time. During those months in Detroit, she broke taboos and painted her miscarriage as well as a work entitled "My Birth," a startling look at a partially covered woman's body with Kahlo's bloodied head bursting out of the vagina. (Madonna, naturally, now owns that one.) In his autobiography, Rivera said, "Frida began work on a series of masterpieces which had no precedent in the history of art—paintings which exalted the feminine qualities of endurance of truth, reality, cruelty, and suffering. Never before had a woman put such agonized poetry on canvas as Frida did at this time in Detroit."

Kahlo's move into the cult of personality is a familiar pattern in which women stop being the artist and become the subject of art—transformed from a creative force to an ideal of quietly suffering femininity.

While Kahlo's work never attracted the attention her husband's did, it did win some critical acclaim. The great surrealist Andre Breton came to Mexico and fell in love with Kahlo's work (and Kahlo), calling it "a ribbon around a bomb." He arranged for her to show her work in New York in 1938—one of only two shows during her lifetime. Eventually, though, her failing health left her addicted to painkillers and alcohol. She continued to paint, but the addiction destroyed the controlled, delicate brushwork that had characterized her best work. In 1954, suffering from pneumonia, Kahlo went to a Communist march to protest the U.S. subversion of the left-wing Guatemalan government. Four days later, she died in what may or may not have been a suicide.

Reviving the Cult of Personality

Kahlo largely disappeared from the mainstream art world for almost 30 years, until Hayden Herrera's famous 1983 biography. When it was published, there wasn't a single monograph of Kahlo's work to show people what it looked like, but the biography, which could have been the basis for a Univision telenovela, sparked a Frida frenzy. By 1991, the Metropolitan Museum of Art was using her self-portrait to advertise an exhibit on the side of New York City buses.

Today, Kahlo's legend is much more akin to that of Evita Peron than of van Gogh. (It's no coincidence that when Madonna was unable to play Kahlo in a movie 10 years ago, she went on to star as Evita.) Among all the Kahlo tchotchkes now on sale at the NMWA gift shop, only her self-portraits adorn the fridge magnets, not "My Birth," or "A Few Small Nips," a disturbing image of a bleeding woman lying on a bed with a man standing over her wielding a stiletto. Kahlo's visage has become a symbol in its own right—a trend evident in the number of artists now creating tributes to her. Chicano artists in California have been incorporating her image into their murals since the 1970s in celebrations of their heritage. But the practice has become so common that the Japanese performance artist and drag queen Yasumasa Morimura recently did a show called "An Inner Dialogue with Frida Kahlo," in which he painted himself as Kahlo self-portraits.

Plenty of people have been thrilled by Fridamania, and not just because it may represent a feminist triumph. "I don't necessarily think that the excessive popularity of an artist is a bad thing," says MoLAA's Gregorio Luke. "You can agree or disagree with the sideshow, the marketing of it all. But we need a younger generation to get involved in the art world, and she draws them in. Young people dress like her. It's a fad, but a welcome one."

He might also mention that it's a profitable one, as Kahlo's icon status has driven up the value of her work, giving museums something besides the ubiquitous Impressionist shows to draw large crowds and gin up gift-shop sales. But Fridamania does have its downside, revealing particular dangers for the work of women artists who are treated as phenomena rather than simply as artists.

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Kahlo's move into the cult of personality is a familiar pattern in which women stop being the artist and become the subject of art, transformed from a powerful creative force to an ideal of quietly suffering femininity. In her book *Women, Art and Society*, Whitney Chadwick traces the trend back to the 16th century, with stories like that of Marietta Robusti, the eldest daughter of the Venetian painter Tintoretto. Robusti worked full-time in her father's workshop for 15 years, developing skills that were considered indistinguishable from the great master's. Her fame as a portrait painter earned her the respect of emperors and the devotion of her father. After her death during childbirth at age 30, Robusti became a subject of fascination for other artists and writers, not because of her great work, but because of her tragic ending. According to Chadwick, Romantic artists of the 19th century transformed Robusti from a gifted prodigy into "a tubercular heroine passively expiring as she stimulated her father to new creative heights."

A female artist needs a compelling tragic biography to enter the male canon, yet her work is then trivialized because of that biography—something that rarely happens to men.

Some feminist art historians have struggled against such reworkings of women artists, but Kahlo's pop-culture mania revives it with a vengeance. Kahlo certainly facilitated this process by painting herself as the quietly suffering female. In every possible sense, the mass-culture Kahlo embodies that now-poisonous term: victimhood. She was the victim of patriarchal culture, victim of an unfaithful husband, and simply the victim of a horrific accident. But that's probably one reason why she's so popular. "People like to see women as victims," says Mary Garrard, a professor of art history at American University.

Just Like a Woman

The art establishment's demand for tragic bio as a prerequisite for greatness has given talented women artists wings of wax. Take the case of Artemisia Gentileschi, whom *The New York Times* dubbed "this season's 'it' girl," after an exhibition of her work opened in February at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Born in Rome in 1593, Artemisia was the daughter of Orazio Gentileschi, one of Caravaggio's most important followers. Artemisia is the first woman artist in the history of Western art whose historical significance is unquestionable. She also had a good story. In 1612, she was raped by one of her father's assistants, which prompted an O.J.-style trial during which the teenage Artemisia was tortured with thumbscrews to establish the truth of her statements. Despite her ordeal, she went on to become famous as an artist during her lifetime, and was the first woman admitted to the famed Accademia dell'Arte del Disegno in Florence. She was one of feminist scholars' first rediscoveries in the 1970s. But, as is the pattern, much of Artemisia's recent celebrity has not come from her art but from her story, which has inspired a number of plays, movies, and books, including Susan Vreeland's recent novel, *The Passion of Artemisia*, and the play "Lapis Blue Blood Red," which opened in New York in mid-February.

Unlike the fawning reverence accorded Kahlo, though, Artemisia's work is now taking something of a beating, particularly from the Met exhibit, which is curated with a highly skeptical view of her contributions to Western art. Met curator and spokesman Keith Christiansen has said that feminists, preoccupied with her biography and victimhood, have exaggerated Artemisia's achievement. She is, in his estimation, a mediocre artist.

Yet Christiansen seems to be reacting more to the pop-culture inflation of the artist than to the art itself. Her celebrity notwithstanding, Artemisia is an important figure in art history, having painted women in a way no one ever had before her. Her "Judith Slaying Holofernes," for instance, shows a muscular Judith hacking off Holofernes's head. Previous paintings of the story by men (and there were many) had always portrayed a squeamish Judith taking a gingerly approach to her grisly task, as befitting their view of women. If nothing else, Artemisia could do something men of the Accademia were not allowed to: She painted women from nude female models, making her all-nude paintings of Susanna and Cleopatra rare works for that time.

The backlash over Artemisia illustrates an artistic double standard: The female artist needs a compelling

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tragic biography to enter the male canon, yet her work is then trivialized because of that biography—something that rarely happens to men. Critics have complained about the overemphasis on biography in art marketing by promoters of van Gogh. But as Garrard points out, nobody ever says van Gogh is overrated. "It's the women's artists' reputations that are always vulnerable," she says.

The Rise Before the Fall

Kahlo will no doubt suffer the same fate as Artemisia—although it's a testament to her work that the backlash hasn't come sooner. At the same time, Kahlo's work might benefit from a clearer examination that focuses less on her painting as autobiography. The NMWA exhibit is a good example of how the current view of Kahlo often fails to acknowledge that perhaps her images transcend autobiography and speak to universal themes, as all great art should. Walk through the NMWA's exhibit, and you'll see that even Kahlo's still-life paintings are treated as a reflection of her personal life. The "open fruit," we're told, depict her aggressive sexuality and obsession with fertility, as do the monkeys in her self-portraits, even though she had them as pets. (Apparently her pet dog, which she also painted, carries no such connotations.)

This kind of analysis, which is just as often articulated by women as by men, follows another long tradition in art criticism of attributing stereotypical female values to the work of women painters and eroticizing their subjects, regardless of how the painters intended the work to be read. For instance, one of the common interpretations of Kahlo's work is that it demonstrates how much she mourned her inability to have children. Herrera writes, "Many of her paintings express this fascination with procreation, and some directly reflect her despair at not having children. One of the most moving of the latter is 'Me and My Doll,' painted in 1937." Yet that painting is hardly the image you'd expect from someone desperate for motherhood. It is a self-portrait of Kahlo sitting on a bed next to a lifeless looking child/doll. She is smoking a cigarette and looks bored, and is sitting some distance from the child on the bed—a reflection of, perhaps, her real lack of maternal instincts. Her other images of childbirth and pregnancy are some of the most violent and disturbing ever to grace a canvas.

Arizona State University's Lindauer has argued that nowhere in Kahlo's letters does she reveal a deep longing for children, and that whatever regrets she did express publicly may have been because her culture demanded them. In fact, Kahlo's letters reflect deep ambivalence—if not outright rejection—of having children, if only because she recognized that children would distract Rivera from his work—and from her. She volunteered for an abortion after one of her pregnancies partly because of this. When she got pregnant again, she considered another one, but ended up having a miscarriage after intentionally disobeying doctors' orders to stay in bed. (She took driving lessons instead.)

While it's impossible to know whether Kahlo's injuries would have allowed her to bring the child to term even if she had stayed in bed, her behavior is hardly that of a woman longing for a baby. The current view of Kahlo's work seems more a reflection of our current hysteria over childless professional women than anything in the art. "People make her a screen for their projections," says Chadwick, now a fellow at the Clark Art Institute and a professor of art at San Francisco State University.

It's entirely possible that Kahlo was conflicted, experiencing both longing for motherhood and relief at not having to endure it—a sentiment many women surely recognize. Yet that view would detract from the hagiography. "If [Kahlo's] paintings were looked at closely, she would become a dangerous woman," says Lindauer, explaining that Kahlo's paintings actually challenge lots of feminine ideals. If they really took a good look at her art, she adds, "People would be less comfortable buying her fridge magnets."

Because she died young, at 47, Kahlo never had a chance to repudiate some of the interpretations of her work as did Georgia O'Keeffe, who once threatened to quit painting if critics kept imbuing her flower paintings with Freudian interpretations. "She didn't want her flower paintings to be identified as the essence of womanhood," says the NMWA's Fisher.

Biography, Warts and All

If the focus of the art business must be on biography, that biography should at least include the artists' warts. Truly great artists, after all, can survive such scrutiny. But, because it seems a woman must become a saint to gain admittance to the Met, there is a great tendency by Kahlo's marketers to overlook the less appealing part of that biography. It's similar to the way the left likes to ignore the fact that the Guatemalan Nobel laureate Rigoberta Menchu invented much of her memoir. Heroism serves the cause, and there is much of Kahlo's life that is not heroic.

Many of her surgeries may have been unnecessary. Even Herrera notes, "If Frida's physical problems had been as grave as she made out, she would never have been able to translate them into art." Kahlo's close

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friend, the famous doctor Leo Eloesser, believed that she used her many surgeries to get attention from people, particularly from Rivera. There's no doubt that she was obsessed with him in a way that should make feminists cringe. She also made several suicide attempts and spent much of her adult life addicted to drugs and alcohol.

More importantly, though, Kahlo's Communism—now treated as somehow sort of quaint—led her to embrace some unforgivable political positions. In 1936, Rivera, a dedicated Trotskyite, used his clout to petition the Mexican government to give Trotsky and his wife asylum after they were forced out of Norway. Rivera and Kahlo put up the Trotskys in Kahlo's family home, where Kahlo seduced the older man. (She painted a self-portrait dedicated to him that now hangs in Washington's NMWA.)

After Trotsky was assassinated, however, Kahlo turned on her old lover with a vengeance, claiming in an interview that Trotsky was a coward and had stolen from her while he stayed in her house (which wasn't true). "He irritated me from the time that he arrived with his pretentiousness, his pedantry because he thought he was a big deal," she said.

Rarely is this unflattering detail included in the condensed Kahlo story. Nor is the fact that Kahlo turned on Trotsky because she had become a devout Stalinist. Kahlo continued to worship Stalin even after it had become common knowledge that he was responsible for the deaths of millions of people, not to mention Trotsky himself. One of Kahlo's last paintings was called "Stalin and I," and her diary is full of her adolescent scribblings ("Viva Stalin!") about Stalin and her desire to meet him. Less scandalous but worth noting is that Kahlo *despised* the very gringos who now champion her work, and her art reflects her obvious disdain for the United States. One wonders what the postal service was thinking when it put Kahlo on a stamp. "Visas are denied to [foreign] artists with Frida Kahlo's politics," notes Chadwick.

Since her rediscovery in the 1970s, one of the few people to openly criticize Kahlo for her politics was her fellow countryman, the late Nobel laureate Octavio Paz. In *Essays on Mexican Art*, he questions whether someone could be both a great artist and "a despicable cur." In the end, he says they can, but suggests that, because of the way they embraced Stalin, "Diego and Frida ought not to be subjects of beatification but objects of study—and of repentance ... the weaknesses, taints, and defects that show up in the works of Diego and Frida are moral in origin. The two of them betrayed their great gifts, and this can be seen in their painting. An artist may commit political errors and even common crimes, but the truly great artists—Villon or Pound, Caravaggio or Goya—pay for their mistakes and thereby redeem their art and their honor."

It's not an omission necessarily inherent to women's art—Pablo Neruda, the beloved left-wing Chilean poet, wrote poems to Stalin, which are almost never reproduced in books of his poetry. But neglecting the dark side of the artist's narrative deprives the public of a full appreciation of the art. Without knowing that by 1953 Kahlo was so strung out that she could barely pick up a paintbrush, how can the public possibly know why some of her late work is so bad? A casual observer might instead simply conclude after looking at one particularly sloppy, scratched-up canvas in the NMWA exhibit, that perhaps her work is overrated. The museum, after all, doesn't provide a reason to think otherwise.

Which is the really tragic part of Kahlo's story. Because when you sweep away the sideshow, ignore the overwrought analysis, and take a hard look at what she painted, much of it is extraordinary. Her paintings tap into sex and violence, life and death, in original and profound ways. "Suicide of Dorothy Hale," for instance, one of her lesser-known works, was commissioned in 1939 by Clare Booth Luce after her beautiful friend had thrown herself from her New York penthouse. Hale's bleeding corpse is shown smashed at the base of the high-rise, still looking stunning in a black cocktail dress. One shoeless foot is painted as if hanging off the frame, which is itself painted to look splattered with blood. Its surrealist influences are apparent, as are hints of the *retablo* style. Rather than soften Hale's suicide with American-style euphemism, Kahlo used the Mexican tradition of placing death front and center, in all its horror. The painting, even reproduced in black and white, as it is in Herrera's book, makes you stare guiltily the way you might driving past a car accident. Few paintings have such power.

As Gregorio Luke explains, "Her work is very inclusive. She was able to incorporate elements of pop culture, Indian, Aztec mythology, surrealism, a whole variety of things in which many people can identify. She is the multicultural artist par excellence."

So while women might celebrate Kahlo's success, it may be that real progress has come when a woman can be remembered both as a great artist and as a despicable cur. Because in the end, as Garrard notes, "Life is interesting, but art is what the interesting person made." ●

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Zone Defense

Drug-free school zones were supposed to keep dealers away from kids. But what happens when the zones engulf whole cities?

BY JOHN GOULD

IN THE SPRING OF 1997, DEMATRIC YOUNG was living at the Sunset Motel just off Highway 84 in North Lubbock, Texas. The Sunset is run-down place in a mainly Hispanic neighborhood and home to a constantly shifting roster of semi-permanent guests—low income, down-on-their-luck types, often a step away from the homeless shelter. From his room there, on two occasions, Young sold an undercover narcotics agent somewhere between two and four grams—around $400 worth—of cocaine. The normal sentence in the state of Texas for such a crime would have been around ten years. But Young discovered that he would be facing a much harsher sentence, because, unbeknown to him, his motel room was located in a "drug-free school zone."

According to Texas state law, everywhere within 1,000 feet of a school constitutes a "drug-free zone." Anyone convicted of selling or possessing drugs within such a zone is subject to an enhanced sentence—a five-year mandatory minimum over and above the sentence imposed for the original offense. Unfortunately for Young, the Sunset was within 1,000 feet of Cavazos Junior High School. He was never accused of selling drugs to children. Nor did he ever set foot inside the Cavazos schoolyard. But under the Texas drug-free school zone law, neither of these facts is relevant.

Texas law also requires that Young be tried separately for each charge, once for possession of cocaine and additionally for sales of cocaine within a drug-free school zone. And it requires that any sentences be served consecutively rather than concurrently. As a result, Young—20 at the time of his arrest—is now serving a 38-year sentence, ineligible for parole until at least 2021. "His life is over," says his lawyer, Bob Huddleston.

There's little reason to expect that the Texas politicians who created the state's drug-free zone laws would have much sympathy for Young, given that the crime he was convicted of corresponds perfectly with the law they wrote. But even the most tough-on-crime legislators might question whether the intention of a law designed to keep drug dealers away from school children is being well served by the imposition of a massive extra penalty on someone who was not selling to kids, who was nowhere near them, and who was essentially operating out of his home.

All together, drug-free zone laws rank among the country's most specious criminal drug statutes. Over the years, states have created so many of these zones, of such immense scope, that they now encompass almost the entirety of some cities, rendering them overwhelmingly ineffective. Yet, drug-free zoning has hardly been inconsequential. It has helped send countless low-level drug offenders in inner cities—most of them minorities like Young, who's black—to prison for much longer terms than those committing the same crimes in the suburbs, where drug-free zones occupy a dramatically smaller fraction of the overall space. At a time when Americans are increasingly questioning the fairness of drug laws that disproportionately affect minorities—as with the vastly higher penalties associated with crack versus powdered

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cocaine—the drug-free zone régime, though it has the same effect, is not even on the nation's radar screen.

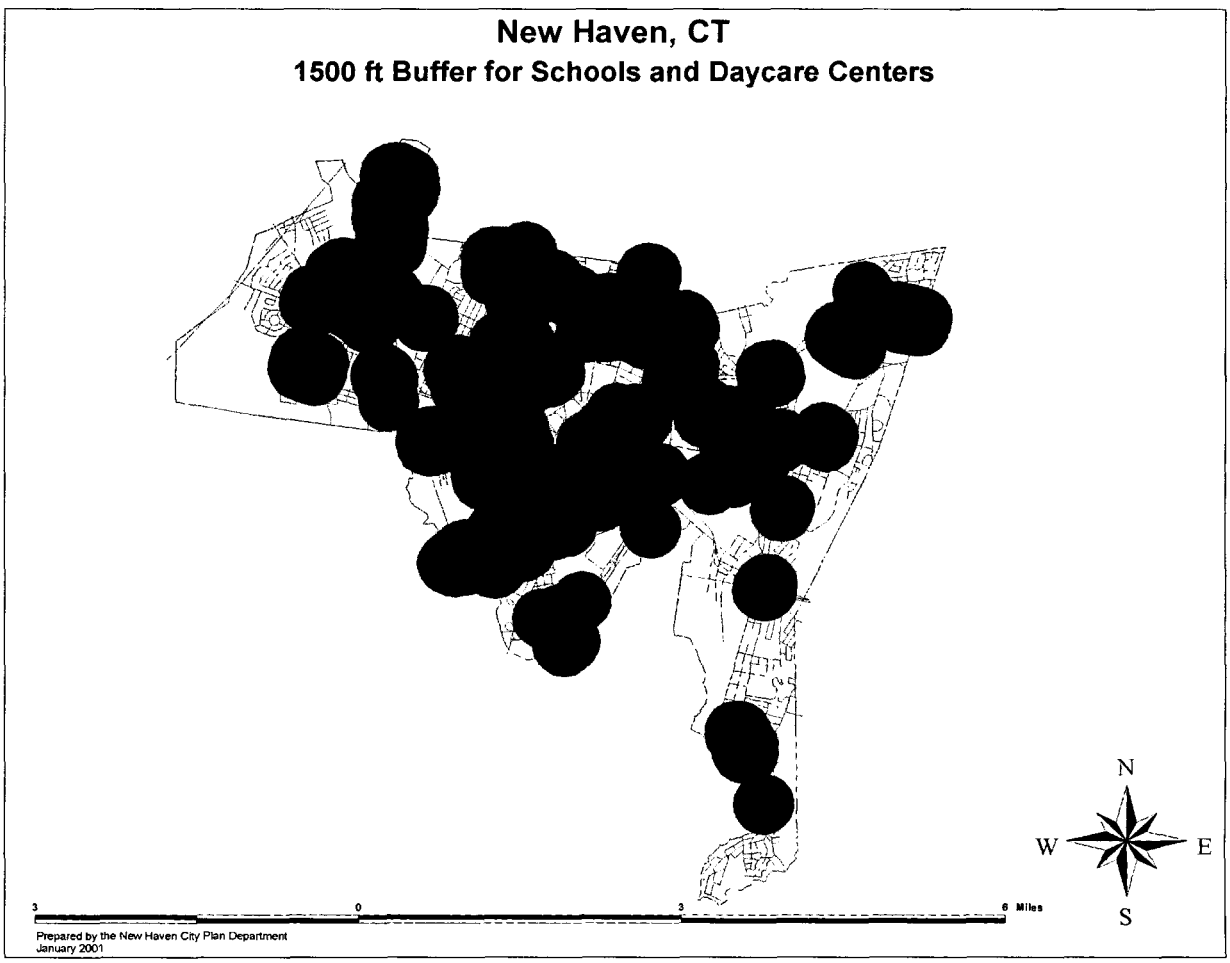
Marking Territory

Drug-free zone criminal statutes originated in the mid-1980s as the crack epidemic hit the country's inner cities. The Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984 imposed enhanced federal penalties on those convicted of selling drugs near schools and other places occupied by kids. The law was, as it remains, remarkably broad—doubling the maximum punishment for possession or distribution of a controlled substance within 1,000 feet of "a public or private elementary, vocational, or secondary school or a public or private college, junior college, or university, or a playground, or a housing facility owned by a public housing authority, or within 100 feet of a public or private youth center, public swimming pool, or video arcade." It exempts only those offenses involving five grams or less of marijuana.

With the renewed public alarm that followed the 1986 death of the University of Maryland basketball star Len Bias from a cocaine overdose, states began creating their own drug-free zones, modeled on the federal statute. The rhetoric justifying these zones made for considerable political capital. Running for re-election in 1986, Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis urged passage of the Massachusetts "school zone" law so that the state could "make schools drug-free by 1990." D.C. Mayor Marion Barry even created drug-free zones in Washington a few months before being arrested for smoking crack.

More than 15 years after Congress passed the initial federal act, supporters of drug-free zone laws can point to countless low-level drug dealers like Dematric Young now behind bars. But they would be hard-pressed to demonstrate that the laws have actually lived up to their most basic aim: reducing illicit drug use among school kids.

If the laws had been successful, drug use by school-age kids should have fallen following their



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implementation. Instead, while use among high-school students did decrease for virtually every type of illicit drug over the course of the '80s—reaching a low around 1992—this decrease had already started by the time the zone laws took effect. Since 1992, levels of drug use have slightly increased.

"Drug-free zones sound tough-minded and reassuring," says Naomi Murakawa, co-director of A Better Way Foundation, a Connecticut-based drug-policy research group. "But they're really neither, because what they're trying to deal with is a highly mobile black-market commodity, and it's just not possible to create a public zone that's genuinely free of something like that.

Even if drug-free zone laws haven't reduced adolescent drug use or created zones that are actually drug-free, they should have at least pushed drug sales away from schools, right? But a recent study conducted through Boston University's School of Public Health by Will Brownsberger, a lecturer at B.U. and Harvard, found no evidence that that's the case.

Having mapped out an extensive sample-set of "school-zone" dealing arrests in Massachusetts, Brownsberger found that drug dealing is actually denser *inside* the zones than it is outside. What's more, within the 1,000-foot radius of the zones, there is no decrease in the density of arrests as you move toward points on the maps closer to schools—that is, drug-free school zones don't seem to deter drug dealers. In high-poverty areas of Springfield during fiscal 1999, for example, Brownsberger's study shows that areas within 250 feet of schools had a density of 44 dealing arrests per square mile, while the density in areas 750 to 1,000 feet distant was only 31. The data aren't conclusive, of course, given that no one tracked the arrests before drug-free zones existed, but they're hardly reassuring.

Logic-Free Zone

The Brownsberger study illustrates how the design of "drug-free zones" is systematically at odds with its intent. For one thing, it's often difficult for anyone to know that he or she is in a drug-free zone. What signs there are only indicate the zones without demarcating them. So someone can easily be 1,000 feet from the nearest drug-free zone indicator and yet be inside the zone.

"It's a great departure from reality to ascribe that level of knowledge to the vast majority of defendants facing 'school zone' charges," says James Fagan, a Democratic member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives and a former assistant district attorney, who has worked as a criminal defense lawyer since 1977. "The average client who gets caught in these zones is an unsophisticated, low-level guy."

It's confusing enough to figure out where the zones begin and where they end when they're sparsely located, as they tend to be in suburban neighborhoods. But in inner cities, where most drug-free zones are found, the zones tend to intersect with one another, creating oddly-shaped, overlapping entities, immensely confusing to people on the street. And often, inner-city drug-free zones aren't only irregular; they're huge. No matter where they're located, each is a big circle, 2,000 to 3,000 feet across—the length of six to 10 football fields. And that's where state laws follow the standard 1,000 to 1,500 foot definition. In Missouri, the radius is 2,000 feet; in Kentucky, 1,000 yards; in South Carolina, half a mile; and in Alabama, a stunning three miles.

In New Haven, Connecticut, the only extensive space that's not part of a drug-free school zone is the Yale golf course.

In urban neighborhoods, the sheer number and concentration of public schools and other designated places create dense and extensive sets of overlapping territories that effectively block off entire swaths of city centers as massive drug-free "school" zones. As Fagan notes, "In the city of Boston, it's virtually impossible not to be within 1,000 feet of a school."

While a slight exaggeration, Fagan's claim is not far off the mark—not only for Boston but for most American cities. In the high-poverty urban areas studied for Brownsberger's report, for example, a full 56 percent of the overall area was within the boundaries of a drug-free zone. A Congressional Research Service study of such areas in the District of Columbia, requested by Massachusetts Sen. Edward Kennedy in 1995, estimated that at least 60 percent of the city fell into a drug-free zone. In New Haven, Conn., the only extensive space that's not part of one is the Yale golf course. In urban areas, drug-free zones often take up more space than they leave.

What this means is that the default assumption for urban drug dealers is that they are, at any given

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time, probably in a drug-free zone. It doesn't take a game theorist to realize that the more this assumption gets made, the less effective the laws will be. Besides the laws simply fail to account for the way in which drug dealers actually behave. As a general rule, low-level dealers conduct business close to where they live. And, as Brownsberger's study demonstrates, most people charged on drug-free zone violations end up being simply those who live within them. Neither are most of those people actually selling to kids. Eighty percent of the cases Brownsberger studied occurred within a drug-free zone, but less than one percent involved sales to minors.

These laws overly target poor African-Americans and Hispanics, not on the basis of drug trade involvement per se, but purely on the basis of where they live.

Advocates nevertheless defend zone-based sentencing laws as providing important "tools" for law enforcement. Bridget Brennan, New York City's special narcotics prosecutor, tellingly admits that she doesn't know the intent of drug-free zone laws. Brennan assumes, upon reflection, that they're meant to dissuade dealers, but says frankly that they have no such effect. What they do—and this is what she likes about them—is give prosecutors the option to go for a stiffer penalty "if appropriate."

But the "appropriateness" which Brennan invokes is strictly a prosecutor's criterion. And, as it turns out, most zone-based charges actually end up being broken down, which means that they're used to get the defendant to plead to lesser charges so as to avoid the mandatory minimum. What's more, Brownsberger found that the decisions prosecutors make on whether to break charges down aren't influenced at all by the proximity of an arrest to a school, nor by whether or not classes were actually in and kids were around. Fagan notes a similar disjuncture in the way drug-free zones give discretion to arresting officers: "I've had cases where the police have literally followed a car for miles in order to stop the guy in a school zone, even though it was two in the morning."

Neighborhood Profiling

A case could be made that, in the end, it doesn't matter what the intent of zone-based sentencing laws is, as long as they help put drug dealers away. But the use of drug-free zone laws as case-management tools by prosecutors and police has at least one systematic and very troubling side effect: It creates a stark bias against inner cities and their largely poor, largely minority, residents.

The virtual omnipresence of urban drug-free zones mean that defendants living in densely populated areas are much more likely to face zone-based charges—and much more likely to be sentenced, and to be sentenced for longer—for the same crimes committed by relatively wealthy, disproportionately white, suburbanites. In Connecticut, for instance, cities whose populations are one-third black or Hispanic have 5.25 drug-free zones per square mile. Towns where minorities make up less than 10 percent of the population have only .48 zones per square mile, according to a recent study by A Better Way Foundation's Sarah Bray. In other words, these laws overly target poor African-Americans and Hispanics, not on the basis of involvement in the drug trade per se, but purely on the basis of where they live.

There is also, unfortunately, evidence of conspicuous racial inconsistencies in decisions on whether or not to charge defendants with drug-free zone violations—particularly on whether or not to charge them with "intent to distribute" within a zone, which is typically determined by the quantity of the drug in a suspect's possession. In 1998, Deborah Ramirez of the Northeastern University Law School and Jack McDevitt, co-director of Northeastern's Center for Criminal Justice Policy Research, conducted a study to determine whether non-whites (for their purposes, blacks and Hispanics) were more or less likely to face "school zone" charges than whites. Among their results: 41 percent of non-whites in possession of less than one-eighth of a gram of cocaine were charged with intent, compared to only 11 percent of whites in possession of the same amount. For amounts over a gram and a half, 94 percent of non-whites were charged but only 26 percent of whites.

Few things poison race relations in America today more than the differential sentencing of white and black or Hispanic people who commit essentially the same crimes. As Judge Robert Mulligan of the Norfolk, Mass., Superior Court observes, the main social effect of these zones is to breed "tremendous cyni-

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cism toward the law, particularly among those groups disproportionately affected by it."

Legal Crack-Up

For years now, defense attorneys have been contesting drug-free-zone sentencing laws in state courts, without much success. Legal challenges to the federal statute have also failed, even in light of the Supreme Court's 1995 decision in *U.S. v. Lopez*, which struck down the federal Gun-Free School Zone Act. In framing that law, which criminalized gun possession within 1,000 feet of a school, Congress had invoked the power of the Constitution's commerce clause. But the high court ruled the act unconstitutional on the grounds that gun possession does not "substantially affect interstate commerce" and is therefore not something Congress has the constitutional authority to regulate. Federal appellate courts have since gone to great, and occasionally acrobatic, lengths to explain why gun possession doesn't affect interstate commerce whereas drug possession does. But despite the tension between the rulings, the federal law has been permitted to stand.

Which means that fixing what's wrong with zone-based sentencing laws will be up to elected officials, particularly at the state level, where most drug-free zone cases are prosecuted. While many politicians will admit that the legislation is deeply flawed, few are eager to challenge it for fear of appearing soft on crime. Some of their constituents, furthermore, are proponents of the laws, and genuinely believe that, despite everything that's wrong with drug-free zones, they are nevertheless important for "sustaining community norms" against the exposure of children to drug use.

The stance of the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) is typical of this line of thinking. (You may remember the NCPC from its mascot, the trench-coat-wearing cartoon dog, McGruff, who encourages kids to "Take a bite out of crime!") Jim Kopple, senior vice-president at the council and a former assistant school superintendent in Wichita, Kan., acknowledges that drug-free zones have done essentially nothing of what they were intended to do. And he is concerned about the systematic prosecutorial bias they've created against inner cities. But, he counters, "Communities need some way of telling themselves and potential offenders that they won't tolerate the exposure of their children to drugs, and especially that they won't tolerate drug dealers preying on them."

Despite Kopple's tentative defense of zone-based sentencing laws, he emphasizes that he and his organization—and increasingly, other groups like it—are urging a more balanced approach to the problem, particularly one that emphasizes reducing demand through treatment.

Among the other important potential changes which Kopple's group might embrace are a reversal of the multiplication, as well as a substantial reduction in the size, of drug-free zones. The pervasiveness and the huge radii of the zones are to blame for most of what makes them ineffective as well as troubling. Drug-free zones should be limited to a tight, easily understandable category of obviously kid-inhabited public places (say, schools and playgrounds), and they should be reduced in size to the immediate areas surrounding the places they concern. They should also take effect only when children are actually in school.

These changes would go a long way toward achieving the law's original goal—keeping drug dealers away from kids. It would also reduce the ratio of "incidental" zone-based charges—e.g., charges against someone arrested while driving his car through a zone or while sitting in her apartment on a Saturday night.

No less importantly, though, scaling back drug-free zones would greatly mitigate the suburban-urban sentencing disparity, along with its unintended consequence of landing disproportionate numbers of poor people and minorities in prison. Nor is it too much to imagine that such a move might partially restore inner city residents' faith in the American promise of equality before the law.

Above all, drug-free zone legislation must include institutional resources for the vigorous monitoring of its effectiveness. The Omnibus Crime Control Act of 1990—sponsored by Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.)—did authorize the attorney general to design a program to evaluate the effectiveness of drug-free school zone enforcement efforts. But no appropriations were ever made, no evaluations were ever conducted, and no report was ever written. There really is no excuse for this kind of laxity among the architects of laws that rest on such dubious empirical assumptions as drug-free zones do. Just as it is foolish to make a major legislative change without evidence of a major problem, it's no less foolish to take a major legislative initiative without evidence that it would—or could possibly—remedy the problem it addresses. ●

Research assistance provided by Justin Peters and Avishay Artsy.

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Tidbits & Outrages

SECURING THE "GREEN" VOTE

Dark-horse presidential candidate Gov. Howard Dean (D-Vt.) hasn't yet been asked whether or not he inhaled, but supporters of medical marijuana are pressuring him with a poll showing that 70 percent of voters in New Hampshire—the site of the first presidential primary—support medical marijuana legislation.

TOM DELAY'S COLLEGE RANKINGS

Rep. Tom DeLay (R-Texas) recently urged an audience at a Texas Baptist church to "throw the P.C. out and bring God in" when choosing colleges for their children. DeLay singled out Baylor University and Texas A&M University— both notably conservative schools— as unacceptable choices because each refuses to teach creationism.

OBESE POLICE

Florida donut shops may soon be conspicuously short of cops. In an effort to trim down its troopers, the state highway patrol has declared officers more than 15 pounds overweight to be ineligible for the state's new $500 bonuses.

MEDIA MALPRACTICE?

"This is my diagnosis as a medical doctor. Arafat will not be around very much longer. And I doubt he has the mental capability to be around presently."-Rep. John Cooksey (R-La.)—an ophthalmologist.

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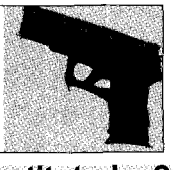

French authorities recently instituted a 24-hour cooling-off period— not for buying a gun, but for releasing results of a driver's exam. According to Reuters, more than two-thirds of the country's 3.5 million learners fail their driving test, leading many to attack—often at gunpoint—examiners who fail them.

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The Tow-Away Tax Break

Why car donation programs benefit everyone but the charities they're intended to help.

BY TYLER CABOT

PERHAPS YOU'VE SEEN THE FLYERS or heard the ads on the radio: Donate your used car to charity and we'll arrive at your home, arrange the title transfer, and tow away your old clunker, giving the proceeds to your favorite charity. Over the past few years, hundreds of popular charities have launched such programs as a way to raise money, including the Red Cross, MADD, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Easter Seals, and the United Way. To most people, it sounds like a great deal. Getting rid of an old car is a hassle. Giving it to charity, on the other hand, leaves you with a warm feeling—and a nice tax deduction, too, since the government allows those who donate a used car to deduct its full "fair-market value." So it's no surprise that car donation drives are increasingly popular, especially with civic-minded upper-middle-class types. Who ever said coddled yuppies don't have hearts?

Unfortunately, there's a catch, though you're unlikely to hear about it from television ads, phone operators, or tow-truck drivers. Just because Uncle Sam gives you a $1,000 tax deduction for donating your car doesn't mean that Easter Seals will receive a check in the same amount. The problem with car donation programs is that most of the benefits accrue not to the charity, but to the person who donates a car. So popular are these programs that I didn't have to look far for an example to demonstrate how badly they're flawed. In early March, the editor-in-chief of this magazine, Paul Glastris, bid farewell to his broken-down 1991 Volkswagen Jetta, and donated it to the good folks at the American Cancer Society. Like millions of Americans, Paul liked the idea of helping a charity, and didn't mind the tax break, either. The Jetta was, he admits, "undrivable." It had a burned-out engine, more rust that Michael Jordan's knees, and "what you might call 'ever-expanding head and leg room'—the interior molding was perpetually disintegrating onto the passengers and driver," he told me. Paul's mechanic told him that the car was junk.

So he picked up the phone, dialed the American Cancer Society's "Cars for a Cure" program, and arranged for a pickup. Shortly after, he received a receipt listing the car's mileage (80,000) but saying nothing of its woeful condition or estimated worth. (Under federal law, tax deductions are do-it-yourself.) Paul followed the charity's instructions to visit either the Kelley Blue Book or the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) Web sites to determine the fair-market value of a '91 Jetta, which in turn determines the size of his tax deduction (for people in the 28-percent tax bracket it's about one-third the value of the car). NADA offers a three-tiered system—High, Medium, Low—to determine the quality and value of a used car. Even a car that

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rates "low" must be able to pass local inspection standards and run safely. But the giver is the sole determinant of the car's value, so there's nothing stopping Paul, or anyone else, from claiming the low estimate ($2,475), the medium one ($3,425), or even the high one ($4,150). For Paul, that corresponds to a tax break of anywhere from about $700 to about $1,200.

So how close are these figures to the actual value of Paul's dilapidated Jetta? There's no category for "heap of junk," so to find out just what price his car might fetch, I called Insurance Auto Auction, the company that will auction Paul's car. (For cost and convenience, most used cars aren't resold to customers, but auctioned for scrap.) They estimated that a '91 Jetta in the condition described would bring about $100 to $200. In other words, Paul stands to receive a tax deduction approaching $1,000 for a car worth, at best, $200.

But the scandal doesn't end there, because not all of that sum will go to the Cancer Society. That's because most charities don't have the resources to run car donation programs themselves, and instead rely on private fundraising companies to run their program. These companies enjoy a virtual monopoly that lets them extract an exorbitant chunk of the car's value: From that $200, deduct the towing fee, the title-transfer fee, advertising fees, and employee salaries—all before the company even takes its share of the profit. By the time the check for Paul's car reaches the charity's coffers, the American Cancer Society will be lucky to get $100.

Accounting Only Enron Could Love

For all their seeming practicality, donated car programs are one of the least efficient ways to help charities raise money. They also drain much-needed tax revenue. The federal government doesn't track just how much revenue is forfeited in this way—nor do most states—but a study from the California attorney general's office provides a glimpse of just how wasteful this system can be. The study revealed that of the $37 million raised by commercial fundraisers in 1991 through the sale of donated vehicles, only $11.5 million reached charities. The remainder went to the fundraisers. And keep in mind that that $37 million is the money raised by *selling* the cars—it's a fraction of the amount taken in tax deductions by those who were able to deduct the full Blue Book value of their cars. So the problem is twofold: Charities are victimized by fundraisers to which they're beholden, while the IRS offers tax deductions to raise money that charities never see. Extrapolate California's example across all 50 states and the amount of tax revenue lost is staggering. The federal government is forfeiting hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenue in order to allow charities to collect a fraction of that sum. It's the practical equivalent of the Pentagon's $600 toilet seats.

That hasn't stopped the programs from flourishing. These days, ads for car donation programs are everywhere—radio, television, newspapers. The American Kidney Foundation's "Kidney Car Program," the largest such program in the country, collected 72,000 vehicles last year, a 78 percent increase just in the last five years. Several years ago, the Better Business Bureau estimated that the average metropolitan city donates between 8,000 and 10,000 cars a year (that equates to $4 million to $5 million dollars in revenue)—a figure industry experts consider extremely conservative and outdated. Today, an educated guess would put the national figure at around two million cars donated to charity annually, with a value of around $1 billion.

According to Bennett Weiner, chief operating officer of the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance, there is no single factor for the sudden proliferation of car donation programs, but a confluence of several factors: consumer convenience, cash-strapped charities, and old-fashioned greed. Like any competitive industry, charities must vie with each other for a limited pool of donations. When first introduced in 1978 by the Davis Memorial Goodwill, which serves the greater Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, car donation drives were an intriguing new way to add to this pool. In its first year, Davis Memorial received only five vehicles (compared with 4,063 cars last year), but this was enough to begin a national trend. Before long, private fundraising companies cropped up and began marketing their services to charities. By taking care of the logistical problems that were often difficult for charities to handle—towing and transfer of title—these companies made car donation programs not only profitable, but easy to implement. Their message, says Weiner, was appealingly simple: nonprofits "don't have to put up any money ... don't have to do anything but sign a contract." In exchange for lending their name to these private fundraising companies, charities receive a welcome infusion of new funds, which Weiner says is considered "found money," since the charity does little more than cash a monthly check. Coupled with the public's inher-

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ent loathing of used car dealers, it's easy to see why there has been a national surge both in charities participing in these programs and people donating cars to them.

Vehicle Vultures

Because most charities rely on private companies to facilitate their car donation programs, they're essentially helpless to prevent fundraisers from keeping the bulk of the proceeds. To understand why this system yields so little for charities, it's necessary to understand how private, for-profit fundraising companies operate. Fortunately, some states, such as California, require fundraisers to detail their annual expenditures and gross income. These reports offer the best glimpse of where the money actually goes and how third-party agents often gouge charities with exorbitant commissions and fees.

One such company is Car Program LLC, which operates America's Car Donation Charities Center and has contractual relationships with 178 different charities, from the American Life League to the New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans. In 1999 it raised nearly $5.2 million in the name of Agape Village, Inc., a shelter for homeless children in Pleasanton, Calif. But by the time the company had deducted its $4.6 million in expenses (including nearly $600,000 in fees and $686,000 in salaries) only $566,713 remained for the homeless shelter—or about 11 cents for every dollar collected. Put another way, for every used car that sold at auction for $400 (a typical sum), Agape Village collected just over $40.

This is hardly an isolated example. The same year, Sterling Star Company, another private fundraiser in San Francisco, managed to raise $525,053 in the name of Shiloh International Ministries. But after collecting $85,000 in fees, $77,000 in salaries, and $332,000 in expenditures, Shiloh was left with a mere $30,001.

Raising revenue through donated cars is difficult even when charities don't depend on intermediaries. Consider the case of another California charity, the Cerebral Palsy Center for the Bay Area, which contracted with a fundraising company called Vehicle Donation Processing Center. Of the $72,000 the company raised, it kept only $12,000 in commissions and salaries. Yet after other expenses—mainly, the $41,800 it spent on advertising to encourage donations—the charity received just $9,124. So it's no surprise that, on average, California charities that contracted with private fundraisers received only 31 percent of the gross revenue that the funds raised.

Don't Ask, Don't Tell

Private fundraisers are only half the problem. The government also forfeits a huge chunk of tax revenue to a much less conspicuous group: people who donate their cars to charity and take a deduction. To be sure, it is perfectly legal to deduct the full "fair-market value" of a donated car. But as a means of raising money for charities, that doesn't make much sense.

Even car dealers admit that a car's Blue Book value is inflated, even for vehicles in good condition. Most couldn't be sold for the figure listed. A donated car's value also drops practically from the moment it leaves your driveway. This stems from the circumstance in which donated cars are sold. For the sake of ease, most fundraisers put the cars up for auction, rather than selling them to individual buyers, which would yield more money, but consumes too much of a fundraiser's time to be profitable. With few exceptions, auctioned cars tend to sell in the $400 to $500 range, even if their fair-market value is estimated to be much higher. So even those who stringently follow IRS guidelines overestimate the value of donated vehicles, which, by definition, is highly inflated.

Just how many millions of dollars in tax revenue is lost through inflated car donation deductions is a mystery. The IRS doesn't track the figure. Except in cases where laws are clearly violated, it gives jurisdiction over professional fundraisers to state attorneys general. But in practice, this amounts to no oversight at all. As one former Treasury official told me, "They make it a point not to be spying on charities."

Nor are fundraisers eager to publicize the figure and draw attention to their sweetheart deal. Michael Nilsen, a spokesman for the Association of Fundraising Professionals, conceded that records for car donation programs are "kind of a loosey-goosey type of thing right now" and couldn't put a figure on it. The fundraisers I contacted for this article all declined as well, one even citing fear of competition as a reason he couldn't offer specifics.

The biggest revenue losses in vehicle donation programs, then, don't stem from swindles or scams or even tricky accounting, but from the millions of dollars the IRS willingly forfeits each year on cars that are donated according to the letter of

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the law.

Constitutional Pile-up

The best way to fix the problem of unscrupulous fundraisers would to be set legislative limits on how big a slice of the pie they can take. But efforts to do so have been thwarted by the courts. Belinda Johns, who serves as California's deputy attorney general and president-elect of the National Association of State Charitable Officials, echoes the frustration of many state lawmakers when she says "there is nothing that can be done about it."

Several states have made unsuccessful attempts. Two early efforts wound up in the U. S. Supreme Court. Both *Schaumburg v. Citizens for a Better Environment* (1980) and *Secretary of State of Maryland v. Joseph H. Munson Co.* (1984) sought to protect citizens and charities from fraud and abuse by establishing an acceptable percentage of revenue that fundraisers could retain. Both were overturned on the grounds that using a percentage-based "litmus test" infringes on the rights of charities to seek contributions and stifles free speech.

In 1985, the North Carolina state legislature tried again, attempting to enact a law that could withstand the court's decisions. Acting on a study which showed that fundraisers regularly withheld fees and commissions that accounted for well over half of the charitable money they collected, lawmakers passed the North Carolina Charitable Solicitations Act, which prohibited fundraisers from retaining "unreasonable" or "excessive" fees. On its face, the law was a model of good sense. It created a three-tiered system to determine if a fundraiser's fees were reasonable, and required fundraisers to disclose to potential donors what percentage of proceeds they had raised in the previous year had been passed on to charities.

And while it granted nonprofit fundraisers the privilege of soliciting without a license, it required all professional fundraisers to obtain one. The law's opponents sued, and in the 1988 case of *Riley v. National Federation of the Blind*, the Supreme Court declared all three of the law's provisions unconstitutional. In effect, this established the limits to government regulation of fundraisers. A state cannot impede fundraisers' soliciting; fundraisers cannot be compelled to disclose their financial status to potential donors; and nonprofit and for-profit fundraisers must be afforded equal rights and privileges in licensing. In effect, a charity can conceal practically anything it wants. As a result, the most states can do to curb aggressive fundraisers is go at the problem in roundabout ways, such as mandating that fundraisers submit their financial reports to state officials for public release, or requiring fundraisers to register as used car dealers. Though such legislative mandates are steps in the right direction, they do little to solve the problem. According to Taron Reeves of Car Program LLC, such laws pose little more than administrative hurdles.

Fixing the Flat

Since the Bush administration has shown itself willing to squeeze most federal programs to the limit, it's worth revisiting this outsized tax break. The car donation tax break is yet another whose benefits accrue largely to the most fortunate (poorer folks tend not to itemize). But the system is sustained mainly by inertia. One way Congress could curb the loss of revenue would be to limit the size of the used-car tax deduction to the actual sale price—not the Blue Book value—of a vehicle. California passed similar legislation in 1998, but stopped short of requiring donors to use the figure in determining their itemization—they are expected only to take it into account. Since most people donate their cars for charitable purposes, such a measure would not likely have a chilling effect on the level of donation.

It's also worth noting that while about 95 percent of fundraisers are for-profit entities, there are several good nonprofit ones, such as Charity Cars of Altamonte Springs, Florida, and the National Kidney Foundation's Kidney Cars program, which can be counted on to at least keep charities' interests in mind. Additionally, there are a few for-profit fundraisers that offer relatively fair returns to their charities, such as the National Vehicle Donation Company, which passes along 63 to 79 cents of each dollar collected depending upon the program.

With each car towed in the name of charity, donors benefit greatly, fundraisers obscenely, charities slightly, and the poor only occasionally. Charities that can't run their own program make do with a small check (which is better than no check). Taxpayers who donate their car are pleased to avoid the hassle and take their deduction. And fundraisers who feed on the system thrive. The only losers are the federal government, the taxpayers who finance it, and the needy who depend on charities—in theory, the very people this is supposed to benefit. ●

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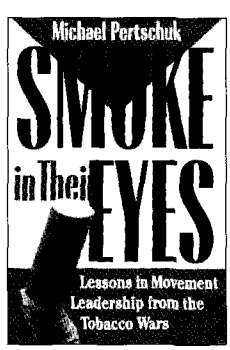
What Were They Smoking?

How the anti-tobacco movement blew the opportunity of a lifetime.

BY JOHN SCHWARTZ

IN 1997, THE TOBACCO WARS SEEMED TO be turning. The anti-tobacco movement, ever the loser against a wily, deep-pocketed industry, seemed on the verge of winning its most thorough victory since 1633, when Sultan Murad IV ordered tobacco users executed as infidels. The industry was on the run, hemmed in by lawsuits from state attorneys general, class-action lawyers, and a growing number of individual smokers and their survivors. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) was gaining in its efforts to regulate tobacco products.



SMOKE IN THEIR EYES: Lessons in Movement Leadership from the Tobacco Wars
by Michael Pertschuk
Vanderbilt University Press, $49.95

Then, in June 1997, the states and plaintiffs attorneys announced a sweeping settlement with the industry that included regulation by the FDA, including voluntary restrictions on advertising and marketing, and even a possibility of regulating cigarette ingredients that might have led to safer smokes. In return, the industry wanted some form of protection from lawsuits. New laws implementing elements of the settlement began making their way through Congress. It was nothing short of astonishing.

Within a year, though, the momentum had dissipated, and the effort to bring the industry into a new age had imploded. Though a settlement with states would be reached by the end of 1998, the broad initiatives proposed in June 1997 were replaced by relatively toothless reforms and a pile of money, which the states generally have used to fill potholes, meet budget shortfalls, and do anything but treat tobacco-related illness and reduce tobacco use. How did everything fall so far so fast? And why do so many other promising movements end in a tragic fizzle?

Part of the answer can be found in Michael Pertschuk's *Smoke in Their Eyes: Lessons in Movement Leadership from the Tobacco Wars*. The chairman of the Federal Trade Commission from 1977 to 1984, Pertschuk has spent recent decades training consumer activists through his organization, the Advocacy Institute. In this book, he asks "how a movement propelled toward a moment of historic opportunity by a cadre of passionate, resourceful, and gifted leaders fell victim, in part, to their conflicting visions of the Good."

He enjoyed a prime vantage point to view the shifting fortunes of the tobacco wars and knew all of the players on the activist side. Most of all, he knew Matthew L. Myers, a longtime anti-tobacco activist and a leader of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. The negotiators of the initial tobacco settlement had chosen Myers as an honest broker who could represent the interests of the public-health community at the negotiating table.

Myers wrestled with his conscience over his role, but, ultimately, he entered into the negotiations, seeing them as a once-in-a-lifetime chance to wrestle public health reforms out of the historically combat-

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ive companies. For his efforts, he was vilified by his own movement for trying to help shape a settlement with the tobacco industry.

You could be forgiven for assuming this book to be an arcana-packed snorefest that settles scores without providing truly useful information. But Pertschuk is a gifted storyteller who understands that the lessons he has wrung out of this nightmarish experience shed light on what's been going wrong with many other movements. Pertschuk, who as a Senate aide in the 1960s pushed cigarette warning labels through Congress in a grueling game of inches, knew how incremental progress against the industry could be, and he thought Myers could help seize the moment and win advances that would have been unimaginable just a few years before.

Compromise takes more courage than continuing to fight and argue. Sometimes fighters have to raise their heads above the fray and remind themselves of who the enemy actually is.

But the anti-tobacco activists' efforts to strike a deal were bitterly opposed, with the opposition falling into two camps. One, led by such advocates as Stanton A. Glantz of the University of California-San Francisco, argued that the settlement was an industry ploy, which would ultimately be a tobacco win, engineered by the best lobbyists and lawmakers money could buy. These advocates wanted to see the industry driven to bankruptcy. What's more, because they believed Washington was a place where real reforms would always be co-opted, they favored local and state action instead.

The other camp, exemplified by public-health advocates like former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop and former FDA Commissioner David A. Kessler, believed that good things could happen in Washington, but pushed for ever stronger measures against the industry and higher taxes on tobacco.

Initially, the first group was the loudest, and it pilloried both the companies and Myers, accusing him of betraying the movement to which he had dedicated decades of his life. At one particularly low point, a Nader-related group calling itself Battle Against Sin in Corporate Society picketed the National Center for Tobacco-Free Kids, handing out fliers with pictures of Myers and fellow center official Bill Novelli that said they were "WANTED FOR SELLING OUT THE PUBLIC'S HEALTH." They suggested that Myers's group expected to make millions in administering the settlement funds—a lie that lingered long after Myers and the group pledged to refuse any such money.

Still, Glantz excoriated Myers in the press and in emailed manifestos to his online congregation. Glantz is rightfully a hero of the movement, having fought for and won unprecedented tobacco control measures in California, and for having brought thousands of tobacco industry documents to light. But he is a crusader, not a negotiator: Compromise, Pertschuk writes, is not part of his "emotional wiring."

During the legislative process, the industry backed away from its original demands for broad immunity from lawsuits and ultimately asked for predictable annual caps on judgment payments and restrictions in some cases of punitive damages. But, as the cost of the legislation grew and the protection dwindled, the companies decided to withdraw their support for any legislation at all, thus dooming the effort.

Myers made many missteps along the way, which Pertschuk acknowledges. Early on, he did not keep important public-health advocates in the loop, leading to a heightened sense of suspicion among the anti-tobacco groups. "When the center was silent, Stan [Glantz] filled the void," one activist explained.

Pertschuk sums up the inquiry with an elegant question, asking how "the collective leadership of the tobacco control movement, heroes all, nonetheless blew the opportunity of a lifetime." He has spent three years finding the answer—and vindicating Matt Myers in the resulting book. If you are very, very lucky, you might have a friend like that sometime in your life.

But that's not all Pertschuk was trying to accomplish. The teacher of advocates finds many lessons in the utter debacle of the tobacco wars. He cites the internecine conflicts among environmental activists and those who want healthcare reform. He also suggests that voters who chose Ralph Nader rather than

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Al Gore, out of disappointment over the moderate stands of the Clinton administration, short-sightedly chose principle over practicality. Underlying the whole sad story is a guiding principle that has gotten all but lost in this polarized society: Sometimes, compromising is the right thing to do. Compromise, Pertschuk writes, takes more courage than continuing to fight and argue. Sometimes fighters have to raise their heads above the fray and remind themselves of who the enemy actually is.

He quotes Jim Tierney, the folksy former Maine attorney general who served as an adviser to the states' tobacco suits: "I believe the fight against the tobacco industry is as addictive as nicotine itself. The very best of public advocates, often in deep personal pain from the loss of a loved one to the deadly cancer marketed so callously by the tobacco industry, were addicted to the fight."

As a reporter who covered this train wreck, I confess that it was heartbreaking to see so much come to so little. As the child of a political family who grew up in the progressive "half-a-loaf" tradition, it just pissed me off. Practicing "half-a-loaf" politics means actually fighting to win, even incremental battles, instead of striking an inspiring pose. Lyndon Johnson understood the rightness of getting things done. Johnson repeatedly weakened the Civil Rights Act of 1957 until liberals were in a rage, but he knew that this bill could pave the way for stronger measures. As Johnson's biographer Robert A. Caro has written, Johnson knew "that the most important thing wasn't what was in the bill. The most important thing was that there be a bill." Or, as Johnson crudely put it, "Once you break the virginity, it'll be easier next time."

Since then, politics has polarized to the point that people disdain it and don't want to get their hands dirty. Content with the beauty of purity, no one ever has to take the blame for failure. Instead, the fighters stand there in the echo chamber, hollering and admiring the sound of their own voices. The real question for advocates and those looking to make real change for the better is deciding when to cut a deal and when to holler—and not just do one or the other all the time. Pertschuk would say that the anti-tobacco movement—and, by implication, many others—has gotten stuck on holler. And it's hard to disagree.

The Washington Monthly's Monthly Journalism Award

CLIFFORD J. LEVY

"Broken Homes"

The New York Times, April 28-30, 2002

For this three-part series exposing neglect and malfeasance at private homes for the mentally ill in New York City, Clifford J. Levy waded through more than 5,000 pages of state inspection reports, performed 200 interviews with workers, residents, and family members, and made more than three dozen visits to homes where 946 residents (326 of them under 60) died between 1995 and 2001. The resulting series paints an appalling picture of squalid living conditions and sordid mistreatment. Levy chronicles hundreds of suicides and unaccounted deaths, workers' falsification of records, residents prostituting themselves and selling drugs from their rooms, patients given the wrong drugs by ill-trained workers, and thousands of dollars of unnecessary procedures performed on residents and charged to the state. Levy's work exposes the broken system that allows for-profit homes to manage and house the mentally ill with little or no government scrutiny.

THE MONTHLY JOURNALISM AWARD is presented each month to one or more newspaper, magazine, radio, or television stories (or series of stories) that demonstrate a commitment to the public interest. We are particularly interested in reporting that explains the successes and failures of government agencies at all levels and of other institutions such as the media, corporations, unions, and foundations that contribute to the existence or solution of public problems. Please send nominations (including a copy of the article or broadcast text) to The Washington Monthly Journalism Award, 733 15th Street, NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20005. Or e-mail us at editors@washingtonmonthly.com. Nominations for stories run in April 2002 are due May 5, 2002.

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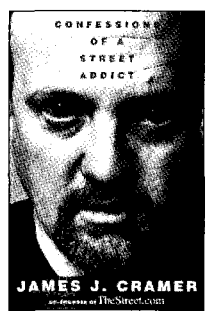
Cramer vs. Cramer

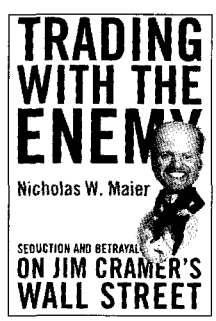
Critics say Wall Street's favorite talking head is obnoxious, abusive, and crooked. Jim Cramer takes issue with "crooked."

By Jamie Malanowski

James J. Cramer is so thoroughly a man of his age that the Museum of the City of New York ought to stuff him now for future exhibition. The bedrock of the Bozo-haired, gruff-talking, Harvard-educated Cramer's reputation is the highly profitable Wall Street hedge fund he ran from 1987 to 2000, but he is much more: investor, gambler, tout, journalist, celebrity. Just as Edith Wharton's characters perfectly exemplify the Gilded Age, Cramer will represent to future generations all our splendid contradictions: brilliant and short-sighted, vain and confessional, mean and sentimental, likable and frightening.



CONFESSIONS OF A STREET ADDICT
by James J. Cramer
Simon & Schuster, $26.00



TRADING WITH THE ENEMY: Seduction and Betrayal on Jim Cramer's Wall Street
by Nicholas W. Maier
HarperCollins, $22.95

Like Bill Clinton, Cramer characterizes the Baby Boomer trait of wanting to prove to everyone that he's smarter than they are, and at the same time be loved for it. It is an elusive objective. Cramer, who on tumultuous trading days has been known to post his pensées on his Web site up to 12 times a day, is clearly a man who values his own opinions (as, obviously, do his investors, subscribers, bookers, and various television executives, most recently CNBC, where he co-hosts the program *America Now* with Lawrence Kudlow).

Now, presumably at mid-career, he has given us a memoir, *Confessions of a Street Addict*. It's an entertaining book, as far as it goes. Cramer has had many adventures and triumphs, and he is a considerate and often amusing guide to what the Wall Street game looks like from perches high and inside. At the same time, the book often feels like an iceberg: It still seems like the bigger chunk of the story, whether about the man or the arena, remains beneath the surface.

Cramer's first claim to fame, his hedge fund, is essentially a legally sanctioned stock gambling club. Because the law considers hedge funds to be high-risk propositions, they are set up so only the very rich can play. Some number of them form a limited partnership under the leadership of a sharpie like Cramer, who invests funds on their behalf, not by identifying and backing good, well-managed companies, but by finding out information, from sources far and wide, published and whispered. It doesn't matter to hedge fund managers whether the news is good or bad; they just as happily bet against companies as for them, hoping to wring a profit from the short-term ups and downs. Either way, they spend their days frantically buying and selling, selling and buying, holding onto little for very long, squirreling away the profits.

I don't know if one has to be monomaniacal to be good at this, but Cramer was top-notch, and he suited up for work every day as if it were up to him and Mel Gibson to drive the English out of Scotland. ("I couldn't bear to be down for a day, let alone a month or a quarter.") Doing the job required not only a vast amount of preparation—Cramer says he got up at 3:30 a.m. daily to start reading—but also, once the trading day commenced, a fanatically single-minded determination to wring the maximum profit out of each trade. Cramer had to make dozens of million-dollar judgments before lunch every day, and he wanted to be right about each one.

Running such a demanding fund in such a demanding way would be load enough for most men. Not Cramer. Even as he was running his fund, he became a financial pundit, writing articles for *Smart Money*, *Time*, and other publications, as well as appearing on CNBC, *Good Morning America*, and elsewhere. If that wasn't enough, in 1996 Cramer tried to get in on the Internet. He and Martin Peretz, co-owner of *The New Republic* and the cornerstone investor of Cramer's hedge

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fund, founded the financial Web site TheStreet.com.

In this process of becoming rich, successful, and famous, Cramer also became a jerk. He admits to juicing stocks and flipping IPOs, stuff that one shouldn't do, dismissing it as so much everybody-does-it "chicanery." He admits that he talked stock at his mother's funeral. When his daughter was being rushed to a hospital, he told his wife he couldn't go because he was shooting a commercial. (He came to his senses a few moments later.) He talks about feeling so guilty about being investigated for not disclosing his holdings in stocks he was writing about (inadvertently, he insists) that he started drinking so much that he got completely blotto and puked volcanically all over his guests at a surprise birthday party.

We also know this side of Cramer from another new book, Nicholas W. Maier's *Trading with the Enemy: Seduction and Betrayal on Jim Cramer's Wall Street*, whose tendentious, oversold title tips its contents. In 1994, Maier was a largely directionless college graduate with a mild interest in the market, fairly unexceptional in every respect except in having parents who were neighbors of Martin Peretz. In the easy, seigniorial way rich people and Mafia dons have of dispensing favors, Peretz sent Maier to Cramer, who hired young Nick at a station at once menial and above his abilities. Maier eventually grew competent and then, later, fed up. He describes Cramer as a mean, volatile, abusive, nasty boss, given to tantrums emphasized by the heaving of computer equipment.

The book is incredibly naive—somewhere there may be a man who is a hero to his valet, but there is no boss whose tender, callow, insecure junior staff feels that he or she really recognizes their great pools of talent and ability—but that doesn't mean it isn't credible. I believe Cramer behaved like a jerk; he admits he was, though obliquely and screened with self-justifications ("To make the hired folk feel the pain when they botch the job and go long on a bum stock ... to me there is no stronger way to drive the point home than writing out the symbol of the piece-of-garbage stock on a Post-It and making the poor slob who picked it stick the Post-It on his forehead and wear it all day until I felt the shame had registered.") But it is the nature of bosses to behave this way—well, not this *exact* way—at least sometimes. Maier made a lot of money working for Cramer. Few of us are as well subsidized when we learn our life lessons. He should shut up.

It's Cramer who should talk more. He's clearly embarrassed by a lot of his excessive behavior. He rationalizes some of it and excuses some of it and simply regrets some more, but never does he really explain why he drove himself to behave the way he did. He often looks like a nearly out-of-control person whose only limit was what he thought he could get away with. In one especially dark story, the editor-in-chief of TheStreet.com (who Cramer later discovers is "an alcoholic [who] had to be fired immediately") suggests to Cramer that they cut Peretz—Cramer's partner and patron—out of the decision-making process. Cramer, apparently without hesitation, agreed; eventually, he reaped the whirlwind. Cramer makes no effort now to justify his bad behavior, but he also doesn't explain why he committed such a rash, risky, treacherous act. Though he calls himself an addict in the book's title, the term is treated mostly as a metaphor. Yet the book is filled with examples of self-destructive behavior, which Cramer treats more as crosses to bear or inexplicable mistakes than as a pattern of pathologies justified because the perpetrator kept making money and TV appearances.

It's in light of these transgressions that we must view Maier's more sensational charges. He originally alleged that Cramer used inside information to profit by trading in shares of a company called Western Digital, and that he was investigated by securities regulators. Maier also wrote that Cramer manipulated CNBC reporters by giving them information about a company whose stock he wanted to trade. When Cramer threatened to sue for libel, Maier's publisher, HarperCollins, pulled the book from the stores and printed a new edition that deleted only the material about Western Digital, saying that it stood by the rest of the material. In an interview, Maier says his big mistake was simply confusing the names of two companies. Well, whatever. The odd thing is that the accusation gains no special credibility from what Maier says about Cramer, but from what Cramer says about himself. "Who would come in and handle the pressure when I [said] 'Let's see how fast we can make him cry?' ... Who could take my incessant badgering about how I would never forgive them or their children for losing my partners' money? ... Only someone who knew I paid $10,000 bonuses on the spot for good ideas ... Only someone who knew I paid my assistant a half million bucks to take the abuse I dealt out ... Someone who wanted to be right and be paid more than he would be anywhere else on earth to be right."

Did you ever suspect the justification would be anything else? Money excuses all evil. Gordon Gekko may be gone, but greed is still good. Cramer talks freely about the times he got caught doing something he shouldn't have. Does he believe we think he got caught every time?

At the end of 2000, Cramer quit his fund. He didn't like the man he had become. He now spends time writing for TheStreet.com, hosting his show, and tending to his family. He says he's happy—and he should be. He has come to his senses and written himself a second act. The sins he has committed will largely float away, and he will remain a rich, rich man.

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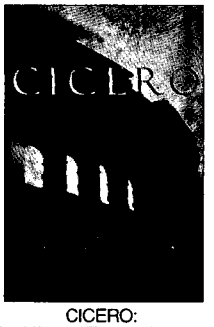
Low Roads Lead To Rome

The most exalted of all Roman politicians was a master of dirty politics.

BY JEFF GREENFIELD

ON MARCH 4, 1841, ABOUT AN HOUR and a half into the longest inaugural address in American history, President William Henry Harrison turned from his clause-by-clause celebration of the Constitution to warn of the lessons posed to the American republic from ancient Rome: "[T]he senate continued to meet in the temple of liberty to talk of the sacredness and beauty of the Commonwealth and the people assembled in the forum, not as in the days of Camillus and the Scipios, to cast their free votes for annual magistrates or pass upon the acts of the senate, but to receive from the hands of the leaders of the respective parties their share of the spoils."



CICERO:
The Life and Times of Rome's Greatest Politician
by Anthony Everitt
Random House, $25.95

If the Roman history seems a bit much, consider that President Harrison's speech was about an hour shorter than intended, thanks to Daniel Webster, who dissuaded the new Chief Executive from submitting the citizenry to a legion-by-legion account of the Roman armies. What Harrison's inaugural nevertheless reveals is how intensely earlier generations of American politicians took to heart the lessons of the Roman Republic.

You can get a taste of what this fascination must have been like if you follow the oratory of Sen. Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.), for whom any amendment, procedural vote, appropriations debate, or quorum call is a dandy excuse to expound on ancient history. For example, during a 1999 House-Senate conference, Byrd instructed dazed listeners on the triumph of Scipio Africanus over Hannibal in 202 B.C., bolstering his case for loan guarantees for the steel industry with highlights from the life of Emperor Majorian. Sadly, neither the majority of today's politicians, nor the bulk of its journalists, has anything like the knowledge of Roman history that any educated citizen would have possessed a century ago. (My own knowledge comes in more or less equal measure from *Gladiator*, *Spartacus*, *Ben-Hur*, and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*.)

So it is that in our time, the name Cicero is more likely to evoke an Illinois community noted for its laid-back approach to matters of public probity than one of the most influential voices of the last 2,000 years. It is the goal of first-time author Anthony Everitt to rescue Marcus Tullius Cicero from his recent descent into obscurity, and to celebrate the great Roman politician and orator who has become "an unknowing architect of constitutions that still govern our lives," and whose oratorical style "can be heard in the speeches of Thomas Jefferson and William Pitt (not to mention Abraham Lincoln and, only half a century ago, Winston Churchill.)"

JEFF GREENFIELD *is a CNN senior analyst. His books include* The People's Choice *and* Oh, Waiter! One Order of Crow! Inside the Strangest Presidential Election Finish in American History.

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Everitt has his work cut out for him. He seeks to encapsulate some 65 years of Roman history during which the Republic buckled and ultimately collapsed under the weight of economic crises, plots and counterplots, civil wars, and successive generations of military men who held the republican form of government in minimum high regard. He also aims to give as rich a glimpse as possible into the life and thinking of Cicero—a task considerably aided by the fact that Cicero's lifelong correspondence with his friend Atticus has survived the ages. Moreover, Everitt seeks to show "how unrecognizably different a world the Roman Republic was from ours," but also that "the motives of human behavior do not change."

He succeeds admirably on the latter mission; reading this book is a dispiriting lesson in the eternal power of pride, envy, gluttony, lust, anger, greed, and sloth. But this success comes at a price: Far from kindling an admiration for Cicero as the noblest Roman of them all, Everitt succeeds—unwittingly, I suspect—in painting a vivid portrait of a vain, temporizing figure of towering self-importance, whose hunger for flattery and position undermined his professed goals for the republic and ultimately cost him his life.

Politics of Personal Destruction

From his earliest days (he was born in 106 B.C.), Cicero was determined to make his mark as a public figure. For someone outside the Roman aristocracy who was by nature unsuited for a military career—he was, in fact, something of a physical coward—that meant a career as an advocate, a lawyer, where success in pleading the case of a litigant led to a measure of fame and a foothold on the ladder to political power. For Cicero, the "main chance" came in 80 B.C., when he defended Sextus Roscius on a charge of murdering his father—almost certainly a frame-up concocted by the real killers. His defense consisted in large measure of a sustained attack on the character of one of the complainants:

> He comes down from his mansion on the Palatine Hill. For his enjoyment, he owns a delightful country place in the suburbs as well as some fine farms close to the city. His home is crammed with costly gold, silver and copper Corinthian and Delian dishes ... And just look at the man himself you see how, with his elegantly styled hair, and reeking of perfume, he floats around the Forum you see how superior he feels himself to be to everything else, that he alone is wealthy and powerful.

Clearly, Cicero did not need Bob Novak or *The Wall Street Journal* editorial page to know a little something about class warfare.

Indeed, along with actual assassination, character assassination was part and parcel of Roman politics.

Had C-SPAN and its ubiquitous boom mikes covered Roman politics, no doubt Cicero would not have lasted a week.

Accusations of promiscuity, drunkenness, and homosexuality were commonplace (and, if the surviving rhetoric of the times is to be believed, "family values" had a very different meaning back then). When it came to such charges, Cicero was both accused and accuser. In one of his famous "Philippics" attacking Mark Antony, he said, "You assumed a man's toga and at once turned it into a prostitute's frock. At first you were a common rent boy; you charged a fixed fee, and a steep one at that." So much for the lamentations bemoaning the loss of civility in our coarser times.

Beyond the personal assaults lay a far more serious matter, one that would drive Cicero's entire public life: how to achieve a stable, just republic. In Cicero's view, a harmonious state was much like a concert. "A state is made harmonious," he argued, "by agreement among dissimilar elements. This is brought about by a fair and reasonable bleeding of the upper, middle, and lower classes, just as if they were musical tones." It was this approach that made Cicero such an important figure so many centuries after his time. This notion echoes in the theories of John Locke and other Enlightenment figures, and also in the American Founding Fathers' struggle to shape a government of checks and balances. But in his own time, as seen through Everitt's capsule history, Cicero's vision seems like the hopeless fantasy of an Esperanto enthusiast.

At root, there were no effective checks and balances in ancient Rome—not in reality. Theoretically, the competing interests of the upper and lower classes reached a kind of equilibrium through an

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array of forces: the Senate and the assembly; tribune and praetor; consuls who governed for one year only. But in reality, Everitt tells us, mob rule was commonplace, and new rulers consistently cancelled the edicts of older ones, often bringing criminal indictments that reached back years, even decades. Ambitious politicians spent fortunes to win approval through gaudy theatrics and gladiatorial displays, while subsidizing grain to support the lower classes (the famous "bread and circuses" some of us may dimly remember from high school civics).

Along with actual assassination, character assassination was part and parcel of Roman politics. Accusations of promiscuity, drunkenness, and homosexuality were common.

Indeed, much of Cicero's public life appears to have been spent imitating King Canute, seeking to roll back the tide of disorder by preaching the virtues of Republican rule. He apparently succeeded, during his tenure as Consul in 63 B.C., in defeating a conspiracy to overthrow the republic. But when later challenges emerged in the form of Pompey and Caesar, Cicero found himself trapped between his hunger for approval and political influence and his principles. His ultimate refusal to join the First Triumvirate forced him into exile. Fifteen years later, when Caesar's adoptive son Octavian joined forced with Mark Antony to uproot the last vestiges of the republic, Cicero's rhetorical attacks on Antony led to his state-sanctioned murder.

An Ancient Ego

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Everitt's account is how unappealing a portrait Cicero paints of himself. He apparently wrote numerous accounts of how utterly splendid his one-year reign as Consul had been, driving his contemporaries to distraction. His letters to Atticus and others reveal how dazzled he believed others to be by his wit and wisdom. "I recalled the weak and weary Senate to its old traditional vigor," he once boasted. "That day, my energy and the course I took brought to the Roman people the first hope of recovering their freedom." (Today, a "close aide" to Cicero would leak such a judgment to Bob Woodward.)

Moreover, Cicero could not control his mouth (or his pen). Again and again, he was unable to resist the clever jibe, aimed at foe or friend. His fate may, in fact, have been sealed when Octavian got wind of a nasty crack aimed at him by his supposed ally Cicero, thus making him less inclined to veto Mark Antony's death sentence against him. Had C-SPAN and its ubiquitous boom mikes covered Roman politics, no doubt Cicero wouldn't have lasted a week.

Cicero's human failings point us to a greater failure of insight—and to his lasting achievement. Cicero believed that the republic could only be saved by better men, imbued with the virtues of prudence, restraint, and loyalty to Republican ways. The utter disaster of such wishful thinking prompted leaders, nearly 2,000 years later, to look to a different answer: to mechanisms that would recognize that "men are not angels" and restrain power despite human nature's worst instincts. Taking Cicero's words to heart, they forged a republic that, so far, has proved impossible for a Caesar to destroy. ●

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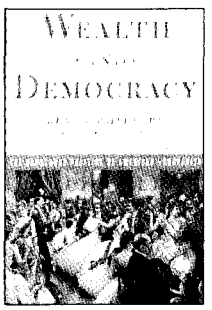
Political Booknotes

Embarrassment of Riches

By Bruce Reed

If Karl Marx had wanted to lay the groundwork for class uprising, he could hardly have done a better job than George W. Bush. First, take power in a disputed election, then move quickly to give the very rich a big tax cut. Raid the Social Security Trust Fund so multimillionaires can keep their trust funds. Look the other way while Enron executives make a bundle driving their company into the ground while swindling workers out of their jobs and pensions.



WEALTH AND DEMOCRACY: A Political History of the American Rich
by Kevin Phillips
Broadway Books, $29.95

But a funny thing happened on the way to the class war: The rich won, and the rest of the country hardly noticed. If the masses are about to storm the gates, they forgot to tell their representatives in Congress. This month, the Senate will decide whether to make permanent the repeal of the estate tax, and Republicans are just a few votes short. The man for our times is Gatsby, not Marx. In the words of that great compassionate conservative, the Duchess of Windsor, "You can never be too rich or too thin."

Not every Republican likes the way the GOP is leaning. Back in 1969, a young Nixon strategist named Kevin Phillips wrote *The Emerging Republican Majority*, which presaged two decades of conservative dominance. Phillips has been trying to make Republicans class-conscious ever since. In 1990, he wrote *The Politics of Rich and Poor*, a populist call to arms that Democrats gleefully used to skewer the elder George Bush.

Twelve years later, Phillips still can't seem to follow the White House talking points. His new book, *Wealth and Democracy*, is a history of the silver spoon that predicts Republican greed will be America's downfall. When it comes to doing the greatest good for the fewest number, he writes, "The world has no other political party with anything like the same record over the last century and a half."

Phillips is a big believer in political cycles, since he made his career predicting one. He sees American history as one long cycle of boom and reform, alternating between "the avid businessman's pursuit and the populist complaint." When the economy swells, the rich grab as much as they can; when it goes south, the little guys rise up to take something back. The rich get richer, and the poor get Democrats.

History does repeat itself in interesting ways. A century ago, when Senators were chosen by legislatures owned and operated by powerful interests, there were 25 millionaires in the Senate. Thanks to the 17th Amendment, our Constitution now provides for the direct election of millionaires, and today's Senate has 20.

In 1921, and again in 2001, Republicans put outspoken, wealthy Pittsburgh industrialists in charge of the Treasury and used budget surpluses as an excuse to slash taxes for the rich. Harding's Treasury Secretary, Andrew Mellon, said the estate tax must be cut or it would end the concept of private property within a couple of generations. Paul O'Neill, his modern counterpart, believes the Bush tax cuts haven't gone far enough, and he wants to abolish the corporate income tax next.

Phillips points out that the political debate between liberals and conservatives hasn't changed much in the last 100 years. He cites William Jennings Bryan's 1896 critique of supply-side economics: "There are those who believe that, if you will only legislate to make the well-to-do prosperous, their prosperity will leak through on those below. The Democratic idea, however, has been that if you legislate to make the masses prosperous, their prosperity will find its way up through every class which rests above them."

Nor is the Bush crowd the first to dress up private greed as civic virtue. Every boom produces its own cheerleaders who defend the concentration of wealth as an inevitable force of human nature. Phillips finds a Reagan-era report crediting six of the seven deadly sins for producing the modern economy—and that's not counting all the television and fast-food fortunes that have sloth to thank. Phillips's most important insight is revealing the central flaw in conservative mythology: wealth is not a value.

Phillips loses his way at times in suggesting that, like the Spanish, Dutch, and British empires before it, the United States is poised on the brink of collapse, "purple-veined with years of high living, lips curled with the insolence of great wealth." But he is right that current Republican priorities are out of whack. When a president can promise a "new war on poverty" one day and a $1.6 trillion tax cut for the wealthy the next, as Bush did last year, no wonder the rich will always be with us.

Phillips believes the United States is ripe for another historical correction. "As the 21st century gets under way, the imbalance of wealth and democracy in the U.S. is unsustainable," he writes. CEOs make 419 times as much as the average worker, and CEO pay is rising five times faster than profits. Payroll taxes mean working people don't take home much more than 20 years ago. Bill Gates's fortune is 14 million times larger than the median family income.

With so much wealth in so few hands, the question is: Why is Kevin Phillips the only one angry? He looks in vain for signs of a populist backlash in Ralph Nader's limp 2000 challenge and the globalization protests in Seattle. He insists that while populism became "passé" in the '90s, and scarcer still after September 11, the silent majority has always taken its time before erupting.

But the real reason most Americans don't share Phillips's seething anger is that we've long considered ourselves a classless society, in good times and bad. We don't resent the rich. We buy Powerball tickets, read *Fortune*, and thrill to celebrity gossip because we'd like to hit pay dirt ourselves someday. Phillips

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thinks the '90s were a failure because Bill Gates became a billionaire, and Bill Clinton was only able to increase the top tax bracket's rate to 39.6 percent. Most Americans wish every decade could be like the '90s because whether they were rich, middle class, or poor, their lives got better and their incomes went up.

Even in hard times, our resentments aren't really about the money. The true target of populist anger in America isn't the rich; it's any institution or individual that doesn't play by the rules or share our values. The reason the politics of resentment always backfires for Democrats is that, on those counts, Americans don't trust government any more than they trust the wealthy. Only *Washington Monthly* readers dream of being in government. The rest of America would rather dream of the Big Rock Candy Mountain.

That doesn't mean Democrats should join the Republican rush to make sure Anna Nicole Smith gets her tax cut. The challenge for Democrats is to put forward an egalitarian vision based not on fading class rhetoric but on values most Americans share: upward mobility, responsibility, and opportunity for all. That vision would focus less on punishing the rich and powerful, and more on making sure every American gets the same chances and plays by the same rules. Democrats support universal pensions to make work pay; Republicans support estate-tax repeal to make death pay. Democrats want to help all Americans save to build estates; Republicans want to help a few privileged families hold onto them.

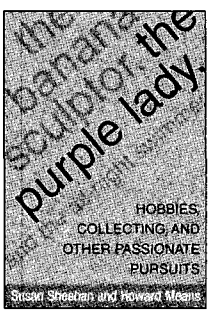
For all his rich-bashing, Phillips himself understands that values matter most. After all, the last great cycle he predicted was built on resentments over values, not class. In the end, history will reward the party that best figures out how to reconcile two competing desires that only seem contradictory: Americans' fundamental determination to build a classless nation, and our equally profound dream to help our children do better. Given the choice between wealth and democracy, America has always chosen both.

BRUCE REED, *formerly Bill Clinton's domestic policy adviser, is now president of the Democratic Leadership Council.*

Collect and Serve

By George Glastris

ONE OF THE LESS-NOTED effects of wealth is the ability it gives those who have it to pursue their chosen pastimes, no matter how obscure. One thinks of the eccentric gentleman-hobbyist Gussie Fink-Nottle, the character from P.G. Wodehouse's novels who spends every waking minute studying newts. But with prosperity spreading deeper and deeper into the middle and even working classes, such characters are no longer found only among the rich. As an auctioneer/appraiser in the very specialized field of early scientific and technical instruments, I know many such people: they are my customers. And as a passionate collector myself of (among other things) Edison phonographs, I must also admit to being such a person.



THE BANANA SCULPTOR, THE PURPLE LADY, AND THE ALL-NIGHT SWIMMER: Hobbies, Collecting, and Other Passionate Pursuits
by Susan Sheehan, Howard Means
Simon & Schuster, $25.00

In their new book, Susan Sheehan and Howard Means present 42 individual profiles of collectors and extreme hobbyists. Aside from a perfunctory introduction, the authors offer little in the way of analysis, but instead let each individual get to the heart of their lives in generous-sized monologues. They include a man restoring a steam locomotive in his backyard; a woman so fascinated with marbles that she has paved her driveway with them; a philatelist who describes finding a rare stamp from Alabama as being like "climbing Everest"; a 50-year-old patent lawyer whose devotion to rollerblading down the hills of San Francisco remains passionate despite the 27-stitch scar on his chin; and a man who is well on the way to his goal of eating at every McDonald's restaurant franchise in the country.

Those of us in the business often joke about people whose love of collecting has gone beyond normal. In Britain they are often called trainspotters or anoraks, and their encyclopedic knowledge, singular focus, and endless talking about their hobby often make them bores to be around. So it is, one suspects, with some of the individuals in this book. One couple collects toy Noah's Arks and has given over their sunroom to one that is over seven feet tall. They refer to some of their arks as "pieces of history" for which they are "chosen protectors." In the Fifth Avenue penthouse of another collector, Leonard Lauder, CEO of Estee Lauder, there is a Picasso leaning against the wall, but his true passion is for postcards; he owns 200,000.

The book features not only those obsessed with collecting things or seeking thrills, but individuals whose peculiar passions are focused on posterity or other people. There's Ted Furley, who has spent more than a decade compiling information on Patrick Charles Keely, an Irish-born architect who built 700 Catholic churches and parish buildings. Furley waxes lyrically on the importance of churches to Irish neighborhoods, describing how some are still centers of community for new ethnic immigrants, and lamenting how so many have been torn down. One suspects that his zeal may save some of these buildings. Then there's Henry Sakaida, a second-generation Japanese-American who, as a favor to an acquaintance in Tokyo who had flown Zeros during World War II, tracked down the American pilot whose plane he had shot down. That favor became a calling, and he has since arranged other "reunions" between former U.S. and Japanese adversaries from World War II, bringing a sense of closure to both.

It's easy to label such people as eccentrics. But I know from my own experience that, whether they are collecting radiator caps or pursuing their own genealogy, such people tend to be genuinely happier than the average American. And in a country premised on the pursuit of happiness, this is no small thing.

GEORGE GLASTRIS, *of Skinner Auction Galleries in Boston, is co-author of* Miller's Collecting Science & Technology *and appears regularly on PBS's Antiques Road Show.*

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Betting on Boris

By Bruce Clark

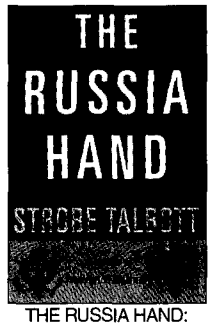
THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN BILL Clinton and Boris Yeltsin was possibly the most important political partnership between two world leaders in modern times. During the seven years following Clinton's inauguration in January 1993, the two presidents met no less than 18 times. In other words, Clinton had nearly as much contact with his opposite number in the Kremlin as his nine predecessors combined.

It was a strange friendship; and regardless of the individuals involved, it would have been a strange diplomatic relationship. Post-Soviet Russia needed America's financial help to reenergize its ruined economy. But that did not give America total leverage over its old enemy. As Russian officials knew, it would not be in America's interest to see Russia decline uncontrollably. The risks of chaos in a nuclear power were too great, and even a poor country can still be a geopolitical menace (witness North Korea). So Russia's leaders could pressure the West by presenting their own policies as the only alternative to an even worse scenario: either uncontrollable anarchy or a slide towards Pyongyang-style autarky. "You wouldn't want us to implode and make a mess of your nice, peaceful world," was Russia's implied message to the West.

Faced with this challenge, and the inherent risk of any approach that bets heavily on one highly vulnerable and unpredictable person, Clinton took a huge gamble, effectively staking his own career on Yeltsin's survival. He used his extraordinary personal and psychological skills to keep their relationship alive.

Whenever the two men met, back-slapped, and bear-hugged, they would wax sentimental about how much they had in common: Were they not giants surrounded by pygmies, men of vision who could do "great things together" if only their bungling aides would allow them? In reality, of course, vast differences lay between them. Clinton had been to the best schools and could lap up the minutiae of any subject; Yeltsin was poorly educated, inarticulate in his own language, and utterly bored by routine and detail.

Yet the affection they developed for one another as they co-managed the consequences of the Soviet collapse was not entirely feigned. Their fates were strangely intertwined. In a sense, each man had it in his power to make or break the other's political career. Clinton might have failed in his re-election bid if he'd appeared to have "lost Russia" by allowing a return to confrontation and insecurity. Yeltsin, fighting in a much tougher corner, needed American money and respect to have any hope of convincing his opponents that there was something to be gained from kowtowing to the West.



THE RUSSIA HAND:
A Memoir of Presidential Diplomacy
by Strobe Talbott
Random House, $29.95

The Russia Hand is billed as a memoir by Strobe Talbott, the one-time journalist who was Clinton's point man on the former Soviet Union. It is not, in fact, very illuminating about Talbott, but it throws an intriguing new light on the psychological devices that his old college friend, Bill Clinton, brought to bear in handling Russia's mercurial leader.

Few westerners understood Yeltsin, but Clinton did. Compared with Mikhail Gorbachev, who won adulation in the capitalist world even as his reputation plunged at home, the politician who finally destroyed the Soviet Union seemed boorish, erratic, an embarrassment in Washington or London.

But Clinton understood—better than the vast majority of westerners (including the professional Russia hands, like Talbott) and better even than many politically savvy Russians. He could sense Yeltsin's deep personal insecurities and the outbursts of irrational rage they prompted. He could empathize with Yeltsin's sense of being surrounded by devious foes. Most important, he understood Yeltsin's passionate determination to claw his way back from seemingly hopeless situations.

Talbott is too much of a British-educated gentleman to give away very much about his own feelings as he watched the Bill-Boris duet at close quarters. He resists the temptation to take retrospective swipes at his administration colleagues, save a momentary wince over the Lewinsky affair. But by the standards of Washingtonian memoirs, there are very few references to personal matters. (The book would be spicier, but perhaps less useful for historians, were he not so polite and patrician.)

If there is a revelation in Talbott's book, it is that Yeltsin's alcoholism was even more serious, from an even earlier stage, than most observers had realized. When Clinton, shortly after his inauguration, telephoned Yeltsin to assure him that Russia ranked high on his list of priorities, the voice on the other end of the line was slurred. "A candidate for tough love, if ever I heard one," was Clinton's revealing, half-jocular, comment to his aides.

In view of Yeltsin's personal foibles, was Clinton's gamble a sensible one? Was it really prudent to bet the future of Russia—and by extension the peace of the world—on the ability of an enfeebled alcoholic to remain alive and sober some of the time? Clinton's thinking, as he confided to Talbott, was that "Yeltsin drunk was better than most of the alternatives sober." Having made that determination, he cultivated the relationship with deftness and subtlety.

One of the main things that Russia wanted from America was simply diplomatic time, and enough fanfare to make the point that even as the remnants of the Soviet economy collapsed, Russia still mattered. Clinton sensed this and acted accordingly.

So when the Russian president threw tantrums at international meetings, Clinton reacted stoically, knowing that the loudness of Yeltsin's bark served to distract from the toothlessness of his bite. In early 1995, conventional wisdom—Russian, as well as Western—had written off Yeltsin's

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chances of re-election. But Clinton believed otherwise. His own political instincts told him that the election was winnable with enough political consultancy and a dreadful enough alternative (which the communists were obliging enough to provide in Gennady Zyuganov).

Days after winning a second term, Yeltsin collapsed again, into a seemingly irreversible decline. For the remainder of his second term he was effective only in bursts—but crucially, from America's point of view, he was capable of riding out the 1998 financial crash and limiting the diplomatic damage from the American-led bombing of Serbia in 1999. In what seemed to be a final favor to his western friends, Yeltsin skillfully engineered the election of his successor, a hitherto obscure KGB officer who was pragmatic in his attitude to the West.

The very fact that catastrophe was averted—both in Russia itself and hence in Russian-Western relations—could be deemed an endorsement of Clinton's judgment. His decision to bet on Yeltsin was not only artfully implemented, it was blessed by luck.

What *The Russia Hand* does not discuss is whether the right goals were pursued. Was it worth expending so much of the West's political capital on inducing Russia to accept the expansion of NATO? Did the U.S. pay sufficient attention, early enough, to the problem of Russian military transfers to Iran? What tradeoffs were made to secure the primary (but largely unspoken) goal of American policy towards Russia in the early post-Soviet years, the safety of the strategic nuclear arsenal and the transfer to Russia of rockets and warheads previously deployed in Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan?

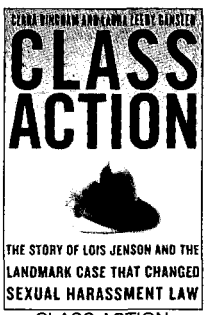
Talbott provides vital raw material for anyone asking these questions. But he tells us relatively little about the fundamental calculations that went into America's Russia policy. What were America's worst fears, and fondest dreams, for Russia? Talbott provides clues, but no clear answers.

BRUCE CLARK *is International Security Editor at* The Economist *and a former Moscow correspondent of* The Times *of London.*

Iron Women

By Stephanie Mencimer

THESE DAYS, LAWSUITS OVER sexual harassment in the workplace seem so commonplace that it's hard to remember that it was only a decade ago that Anita Hill first uttered the term on television. But the ban on employment discrimination on the basis of gender is a relatively new phenomenon—and also something of an accident. When Congress was debating the landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act, it originally didn't include gender among the categories of illegal discrimination. But octogenarian Virginia Congressman Howard Smith, who opposed the act, added the word "sex" to the bill's language in an attempt to make it so unpalatable to the rest of his colleagues that it wouldn't pass. Much to his surprise, it did anyway.



CLASS ACTION:
The Story of Lois Jenson and the Landmark Case That Changed Sexual Harrassment Law
by Clara Bingham and Laura Leedy Gansler
Doubleday, $27.50

Because Congress passed the law without any debate over what constituted sex discrimination, the courts had to interpret the law on their own based on cases brought by a few women brave enough to test it. In 1979, feminist scholar Catharine McKinnon asserted that sexual harassment could not only entail a proposition in exchange for keeping a job, but that a hostile workplace, including repeated exposure to sexually offensive material as a condition of employment, could also be considered a form of illegal discrimination. But it wasn't until 1988, when a small group of women in Minnesota filed a class action against their employer, that McKinnon's premise was really tested in the courtroom.

In *Class Action: The Story of Lois Jenson and the Landmark Case that Changed Sexual Harassment Law*, Clara Bingham and Laura Leedy Gansler have set out to tell the story of those women who made sexual harassment law mean something. It's a horrific tale that dates back to the mid-1970s, when women were entering the workplace in droves. It's a story that should have been told long ago, but was probably overlooked because the women in this story were not college professors or even secretaries. They were blue-collar iron miners, working deep in the belly of Minnesota's Eveleth Mines. As the first women to enter that man's world, they were mercilessly punished. Their torture by the men at the mine makes office butt-pinching episodes seem like child's play.

For years, the women were assaulted, stalked, and terrorized by the men they worked with on a daily basis. One woman who drove a truck suffered repeated bladder infections and severe dehydration because the mine expected her to pee in public the way the men did. She was told, "If you want to work like a man, you got to learn to piss like a man, and if you can't, go home and bake bread." She eventually ended up in the hospital with a kidney infection. When the mine did put up a port-a-potty for the women, the men would push it over while the women were inside, leaving one woman not just humiliated, but severely burned by the chemicals in the toilet.

Men at the mine ejaculated into a woman's locker. They left plastic dildos and other graphic sex toys inside the women's equipment and personal areas. And the offices were filled with obscene graffiti, pornography, and lewd cartoons of naked women being subjected to any number of indignities. But the women endured it, as the mine offered them a way out of poverty. Many were single mothers, some formerly on welfare, who desperately needed the higher-paying jobs the mine offered.

The case got its start in 1984, after the lead plaintiff, Lois Jenson, had suffered repeated and unwanted attention from her supervisor at the mine. Bingham and Gansler trace Jenson's attempts to get the company to institute a policy against harassment and reassign and discipline the man. Eveleth refused. Eventually, Jenson found her way to a prominent plaintiff's attorney who was willing to take on the case, and through a Herculean effort, they managed to assemble a class, which most of the women in the mine were too afraid to join.

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And perhaps for good reason. Once the lawsuit finally went forward, the legal proceedings proved to be nearly as bad as the harassment itself. The women who were brave enough to come forward were subject to a "nuts and sluts" defense strategy, which entailed ruthless grilling by the defense counsel about their personal lives, abortions, sexual history, domestic violence, and past medical history to cast doubt on their claims that the harassment had caused many stress-related disorders from which they suffered. The case dragged on for more than a decade, before it finally settled in 1999 for several million dollars—less than some other cases filed later, but because the class was so small, the actual sums given to the individual women were among the highest on record.

While their sympathies are clear, Bingham and Gansler present a fairly even-handed account of the case, acknowledging, for instance, that the lawyers did not have perfect clients. They let the reader conclude whether Jenson pursued the case because she was a little nuts, or became nuts because she had suffered and then pursued the case. What is crystal clear, though, is that none of the women deserved the treatment she had endured at the mine. And in the end, that's what the legal system ruled, too, making *Jenson v. Eveleth* a landmark case in the brief history of sexual harassment case law.

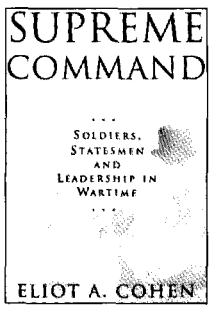
STEPHANIE MENCIMER *is an editor of* The Washington Monthly.

Generally Wrong

By Jacob Heilbrunn

MILITARY HISTORY, LONG REGARDED as the province of the most retrograde spirits, is making a comeback. Now that September 11 has put the country on a permanent state of alert not seen since the days of the Cold War, the study of past military actions has acquired a new relevance. For a democracy like the United States, war, or the threat of hostilities, has always carried with it a host of thorny questions about the balance between liberty and power.

In *Supreme Command*, Eliot A. Cohen, professor and director of strategic studies at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, offers a look at the matter of civilian control of the military. Mercifully, his book enjoys a brevity that his title lacks. Cohen, who writes with concision and insight, robustly argues that, far from being incompetent dunderheads, as commonly portrayed, civilian statesmen can be brilliant commanders.

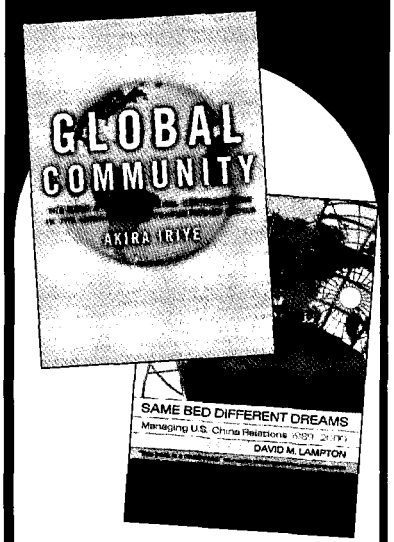


SUPREME COMMAND: Soldiers, Statesmen, and Leadership in Wartime
by Eliot A. Cohen
Free Press, $25.00

Cohen provides sketches of Abraham Lincoln, Georges Clemenceau, Winston Churchill, and David Ben Gurion to argue that the conventional wisdom about civilians meddling in military affairs is all wet. Had these four men not actively intervened, Cohen asserts, their countries might have lost. In making this assertion, Cohen is committing a kind of heresy, namely, deviating from the influential thesis propounded by his own mentor, Samuel Huntington, in his classic work *The Soldier and the State*, that the obligation of the civilian leader in wartime is to defer to the professionals—in short, to get the hell out of the way.

Cohen begins by reminding us that the demand that generals be given a free hand goes back to the Roman republic when Consul Lucius Aemilius Paullus, in 168 B.C., sneered at the senatorial armchair warriors who presumed to advise him about subduing the Macedonians: "The city itself provides enough subjects for conversation; let him confine his garrulity to these; and let him be aware that I shall be satisfied with the advice originating in camp." But as Cohen astutely points out, the idea of the military officer as a consummate professional clinically carrying out his task is nonsense. It was Clausewitz who noted that politics can never be divorced from warfare. Military actions have political

Thinking GLOBALLY



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implications. The Gulf War, for example, was fought by a large coalition of countries to give the United States political cover. But most of them probably didn't contribute much; indeed, they may have gotten in the way of the American military. Cohen also argues Ben Gurion's great virtue was that he knew when to stop even if greater swaths of territory could be occupied.

Perhaps the example *par excellence* of the importance of political considerations comes in Lincoln's prosecution of the Civil War. Cohen goes to great lengths to establish that Lincoln was not a backwoods hick, but a sophisticated consumer of military intelligence who kept an eye firmly fixed on his generals, including Ulysses S. Grant. Lincoln took an interest in the development of firearms, including test-firing new ones, and visited the telegraph office on an almost daily basis to read cables and issue instructions. It was Lincoln, Cohen reminds us, who wanted to crush the South as quickly as possible, while his early generals dithered to the point of insubordination. Cohen says, "Lincoln did not merely find his generals; he controlled them. He molded the war to its last days, and he intended to dominate the making of peace at its end."

Nor was George Clemenceau's behavior markedly different during the Great War. Clemenceau was a tough old bird: "There is no honor of the army, honor of the judiciary, or the Council of State any more than there is an honor of farmers or cigar sellers." According to Cohen, Clemenceau "reviewed the selection of generals down to the level of divisional commander, believing that that was the key level of command." He insisted that France develop new, in-depth defensive positions that proved key to outlasting the German army.

Perhaps Cohen's toughest case to make might be that Churchill was a superb war leader rather than a bungler. If a cult of Churchill arose during and immediately after World War II, he has been relentlessly disparaged since then, at least by a number of professional historians, as Christopher Hitchens most recently recounted in a lengthy essay in *The Atlantic Monthly*. Churchill is portrayed as an adventurer, a desperado, a drunk, a fantasist. Cohen will have none of it.

This impression may be common, but it "is false to the core, for Churchill was a man of system—unorthodox and exuberant system, but system nonetheless." Cohen praises Churchill's incessant questioning of his generals and sometimes caught them unaware, as in his insistence on the importance of naval aviation as opposed to the construction of battleships. Above all, Cohen argues that while Churchill may have made some misjudgments, he got the big strategic decisions right. He warned early on that Hitler had to be stopped; he recognized the importance of an alliance with the United States; and he was correct to warn about Soviet maleficent intentions in Eastern Europe. Despite all the recent attempts to cut Churchill down to size, it's hard not to agree with Cohen. As Shakespeare wrote about Julius Caesar in *Richard III*: "Death makes no conquest of this conqueror/ For now he lives in fame, not in life."

More recent arguments against civilian intrusion into the military can be dated to the Vietnam War. Cohen does not discuss the war extensively, but he effectively rebuts the widespread conviction that civilians hampered the war effort. In fact, there was not too much, but too little civilian questioning of the military's tactics and strategy, or lack thereof. It was the military, he notes, that developed the "body count" and other quantifiable measures that were supposed to indicate the effectiveness of the war effort. Indeed, "[William] Westmoreland, the strait-laced and, on the whole, unimaginative commander would not have lasted four and a half years in command under Lincoln."

It is too early to judge George W. Bush's role in guiding the military in Afghanistan. One suspects, however, that he gave it a rather free hand, though Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld clearly has no patience for military pieties about civilian control. On the contrary, he has infuriated much of the brass with probing questions and a no-nonsense manner.

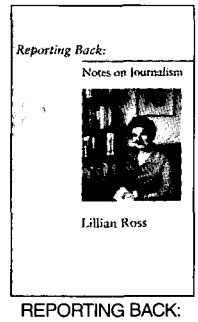
Cohen's book will hardly be the last word on the subject. But works like his and Max Boot's excellent new *Small Wars* give us much to ponder. The military will always grouse about snooping civilians. A new Lincoln or Churchill does not seem to be in the offing. But as the United States embarks upon a vast expansion of its military commitments, from the Philippines to Georgia, it is good to know that the record of civilian control offers some room for comfort.

JACOB HEILBRUNN *is a member of* The Los Angeles Times *editorial board.*

Fabulous Fabulist

By Joshua Green

LILLIAN ROSS, A STAFF WRITER at *The New Yorker* for more than 50 years, first gained fame in 1950 for a profile she wrote of Ernest Hemingway. Like so much of her work, especially in the magazine's "The Talk of the Town" section, she built the profile through vivid scenes and dialogue which she collected while accompanying the author and his fourth wife on a rousing celebratory weekend in New York City (Hemingway had just completed a book). Ross penned what's considered to be the classic eyewitness account of Hemingway, in the course of it developing a lifelong friendship with the author.



REPORTING BACK: Notes on Journalism
by Lillian Ross
Counterpoint, $25.00

As her new book, *Reporting Back: Notes on Journalism*, reveals, that's about par for the course. Ross's journalism follows a conspicuous pattern: She meets a delightful subject, joins them on an exotic outing, and emerges with a sparkling piece of writing and a new friend. Examples here include, but are not limited to, Adlai Stevenson, Norman Mailer, John Huston, Charlie Chaplin, Francois Truffaut, Robin Williams, and multiple generations of Miss America contestants. "I have always been aware of my good fortune," she writes, "in the

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role of a reporter, to have the special blessing of simply being there."

Ross was one of the earliest proponents of what's sometimes referred to as the "fly-on-the-wall" style of journalism (a term she disavows), minimizing her own role in a story and bringing subjects to life with an eye for the telling detail and an ear for dialogue—sort of a literary *cinema vérité*. While many of *The New Yorker* writers of yore were famously circumspect about the process of their craft, Ross is a pleasant exception. Her purpose in *Reporting Back* is to impart some of the lessons she's learned about writing over the course of her career.

These tend to be simple, straightforward, and strongly held. Of her subjects, Ross says: "I set them up, get out of the way, and let them go." Of her editorial voice: "Everything is implied in the facts." And of writing topics: "If I find it interesting to write, I naturally assume the reader will find it interesting to read."

In order to show how these lessons apply, the book includes extended excerpts—occasionally entire "Talk of the Town" items—from Ross's many books and articles. In fact, *Reporting Back* isn't so much a book of writing instruction as it is an annotated guide to the author's greatest hits. This doesn't diminish its effectiveness; her own scrupulous adherence to the suggestions she puts forth are evidence of their value. "When what [a subject] has to say is original and riveting there is only one course for the reporter to take," she primly instructs. "By all means, quote these precious people, and quote them at length." Indeed, Ross was so enamored of the spark and energy she discovered in the playwright Lorraine Hansberry that her 1959 "Talk" piece, included here, is essentially one long Hansberry quote. The effect is no less striking than if Ross had devoted pages to her own description.

The problem with Ross's extended quotations is that one doubts whether anyone speaks quite so flawlessly at such great length. Curiously, for a writer who places a premium on capturing detail, Ross abhors tape recording interviews with her subjects. "Listening with your own ears—and not turning the listening over to a tape recorder—gives one fresh, interesting, and original quotes that bring the person you're writing about alive." As a matter of personal preference, that's fine. But if some of her gems seem too good to be true, perhaps it's because they are. Ross says she substitutes her own words for her subject's if she feels it's more representative, a license that would cost many reporters their job.

Ross's writerly discipline allowed her to return to subjects years or even decades later and pick up the thread of an earlier narrative, as she did with Benny Goodman, Norman Mailer, and assorted other favorites. Good writing, Ross tells us, "requires work, thought, planning, and elbow grease, but a writer does not lay all that on the reader. In the written story, it just happens." Reading these various articles consecutively, as one can do here, adds another level of appreciation to a writer at the top of her craft.

JOSHUA GREEN *is an editor of* The Washington Monthly.

The Hate Debate

By Peter Savodnik

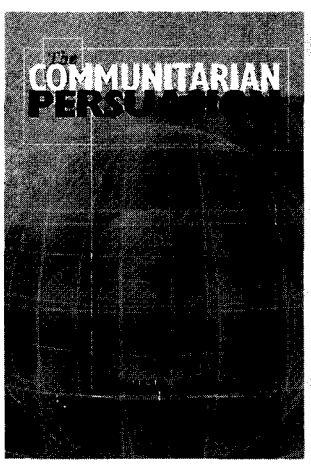
NOT LONG AGO, JASPER, TEXAS, was no more than a crossroads in a remote, arid landscape. Today, this sleepy town 140 miles northeast of Houston is best known as the hate-crime capital of the country, the place where in June 1998 three white men chained James Byrd, Jr., a local black man fondly known as "Son," to the back of a pickup and dragged him three miles until his head was literally torn from its body.

In *Hate Crime*, former CBS Radio reporter Joyce King meticulously maps out the whole gruesome tale, from that fateful night to the investigation to the media maelstrom that turned Jasper (pop. 8,000) into an international spectacle. King's reporting is rich and varied, her language clear and succinct. As a Texan and a black woman, she is ambivalent about covering the Byrd case, which is so far removed from the segregated South but, viewed through the lense of a horrific murder, still so frightfully close.

As King tells it, the 49-year-old Byrd spent most of the evening of his murder at a party not far from home, leaving sometime around 1:45 a.m. in a drunken stupor. In a nearby apartment complex, John William King, Lawrence Russell Brewer, and Shawn Allen Berry

THE COMMUNITARIAN PERSUASION

PHILIP SELZNICK



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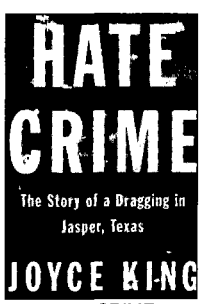
were saddling up for an evening on the town. As Byrd stumbled home, the trio, who were driving along downing beer in Berry's pick-up truck, spotted him and offered him a lift. Byrd jumped into the back of the pick-up and grabbed a beer. It was this offer, the author tells us, that set off John King, who was apparently incensed that Berry would stop for a black man. Soon after, a joy ride through the pitch black countryside turned into a fist fight, which turned into a dragging.

In her book, King carefully details the police investigation, the funeral, the media blitzkrieg, and her own road to Jasper. Initially, King says, she didn't want to venture down it. "Hines swears he is not sending me because I am black," King writes, referring to her boss, "but because he believes I will provide the 'edge' he wants. But the last thing I want is to be in Jasper, to be thrust into the center of such a racially charged national story." In order to understand what motivated the killers, she examines the suspects' childhoods and their earlier prison stints, gleaning further insight from the witness testimony in the three trials.

King concludes that what drove the men to kill Byrd was a streak of prison-born racism that developed during their time behind bars (she implies that during this time, one of them, King, was sexually assaulted by a black man). For their crime, King and Brewer were sentenced to death, Berry to a life term.

King's struggle to come to terms with the terrible crime prompts her to proffer some less-than-impressive solutions. Lighting on the penal system as the root of the problem, she suggests "diversity training" for guards, "dialogue" between prison officials and the public, and spending tax dollars to study racist prison gangs. Finally, she sides forcefully with those who advocate more hate-crime laws.



HATE CRIME:
The Story of a Dragging in Jasper, Texas
by Joyce King
Pantheon Books, $24.00

This last prescription is the most notable, since it is unclear how hate-crime laws would have prevented the murder of James Byrd. Would such laws eradicate existing hate? Deter future hate? In all likelihood, neither. To most supporters, hate-crime laws are significant not because of what they do but because of what they symbolize—namely, that society has zero tolerance for discrimination. Perhaps these statutes, as symbols of tolerance, could lay the groundwork for greater dialogue between races by convincing blacks that whites respect their freedom and dignity. *Hate Crime* only manages to deliver a definitive account of the tragedy that can ensue when they do not.

PETER SAVODNIK *is a staff writer at* The Daily Progress *in Charlottesville, Va.*

Spinning History

By Michael Waldman

WHEN I WORKED IN THE White House for Bill Clinton, I would console new colleagues who were frustrated when the president didn't seem to always acknowledge their presence. "Remember," I would tell them. "He's been in this for a long time. To him we're just a blur in a blue suit." Dick Morris, plainly, was not a blur in a blue suit. For starters, unless my memory fails me, his suits weren't usually blue. Often they were neon, garish, outlandish, very much not what Clark Clifford would have worn. George Stephanopoulos, in his book, describes Morris as looking like a mob lawyer. Morris's presentations inevitably were mesmerizing. They were given with absolute certitude, a staccato recitation of poll numbers, grand strategy, and historical analogies. He would spin out a scenario whereby the Republicans on Capitol Hill would fragment into "hun-ter-gatherers." He would declaim a certain date by which a budget deal would be reached—then, as that date slipped past, announce another with equal conviction.

POWER PLAYS:
Win or Lose—How History's Great Political Leaders Play the Game
by Dick Morris
Regan Books, $25.95

His predictions were wrong as often as they were right; his poll-obsessions and willingness to work for racist Jesse Helms verged on nihilism. But, on the very biggest strategic questions, Morris gave Clinton advice that helped save his presidency. He understood that Clinton had blurred his political identity as a New Democrat in his first two years in office. Morris intuited, too, that success as Chief Executive sometimes required confounding, bold action, such as, say, defying your congressional party to back a balanced budget and sign welfare reform. He understood the power of the presidential bully pulpit and encouraged Clinton to use it. His grasp of tactics was far less sure. "I am the kind of person who sees far off in the horizon, but trips over chairs in front of me," he once explained to me. These strengths and weaknesses are echoed in his columns and Fox News analyses: They are fascinating, closely argued, and sometimes wildly wrong.

So there was reason to expect *Power Plays* to be interesting. Put it this way: I would not go to Dick Morris for a tutorial on moral theory, or even on the day-to-day maneuvering by which most political change occurs. But he does have a sure touch for divining politicians' larger strategic patterns. This book looks at the experiences of 19 leaders, from the U.S. and abroad, and shows how they sought and won power. "Any new figure looking toward a career in politics cannot help but realize that many, many others have come before, and that even a passing review of history can save more than a little heartache down the road," he notes. *Power Plays* is well-researched, often illuminating, and can be a rich source of examples, anecdotes, and archetypes. However, for all the fun of wondering what Morris might have whispered in the ear of Woodrow Wilson ("triangulate before it's too late!"), the interesting case studies don't add up to a coherent theory of leadership.

Morris groups the leaders in categories, like an ornithologist. Some divided and conquered: Lincoln, in the famous debates, pushed Douglas into taking positions that split the Democrats. During Vietnam, Nixon split the Democrats by remaining silent on the war (hence hinting that he was against it).

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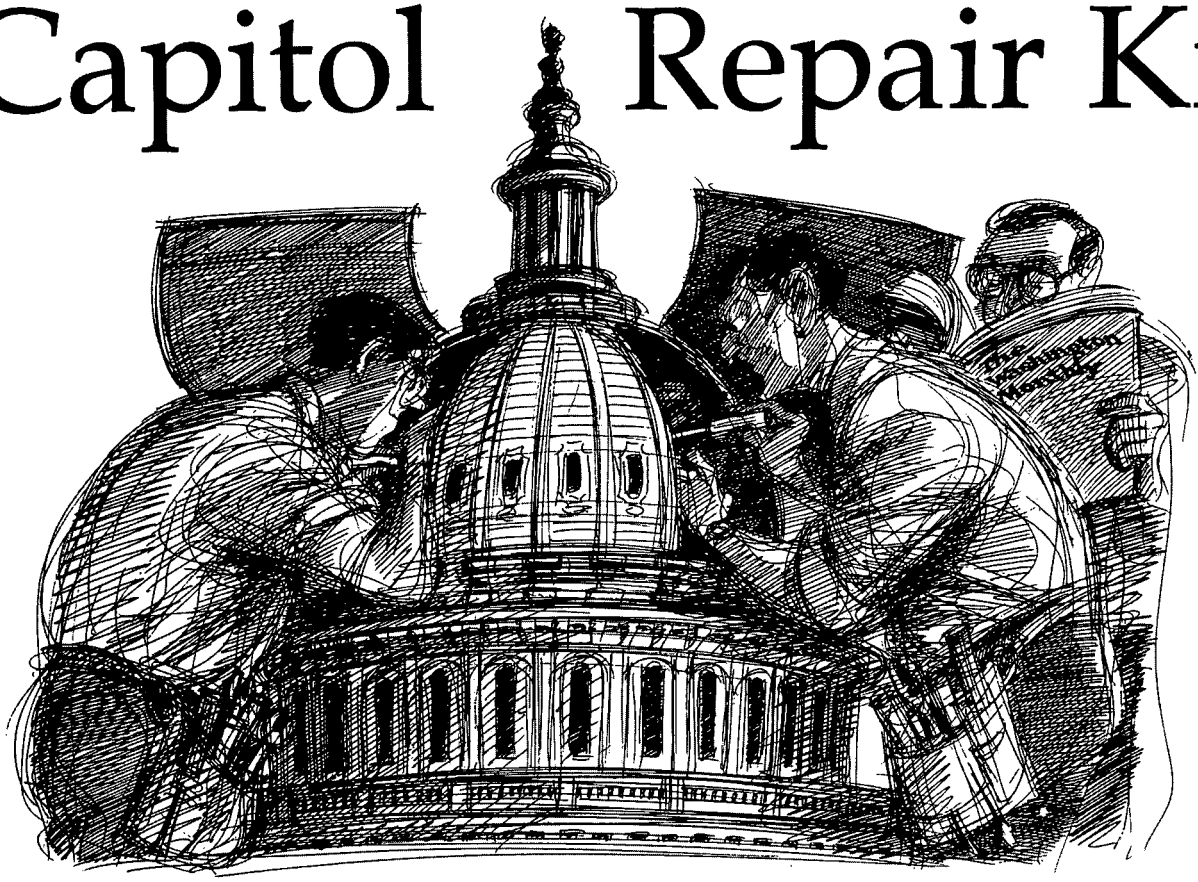

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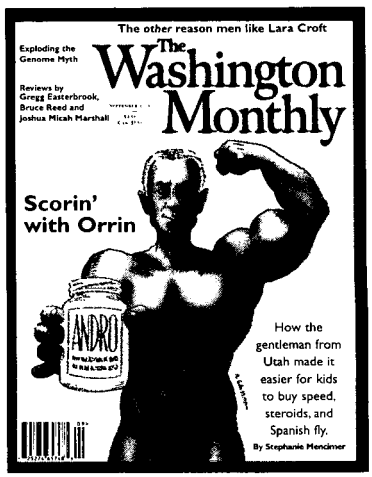

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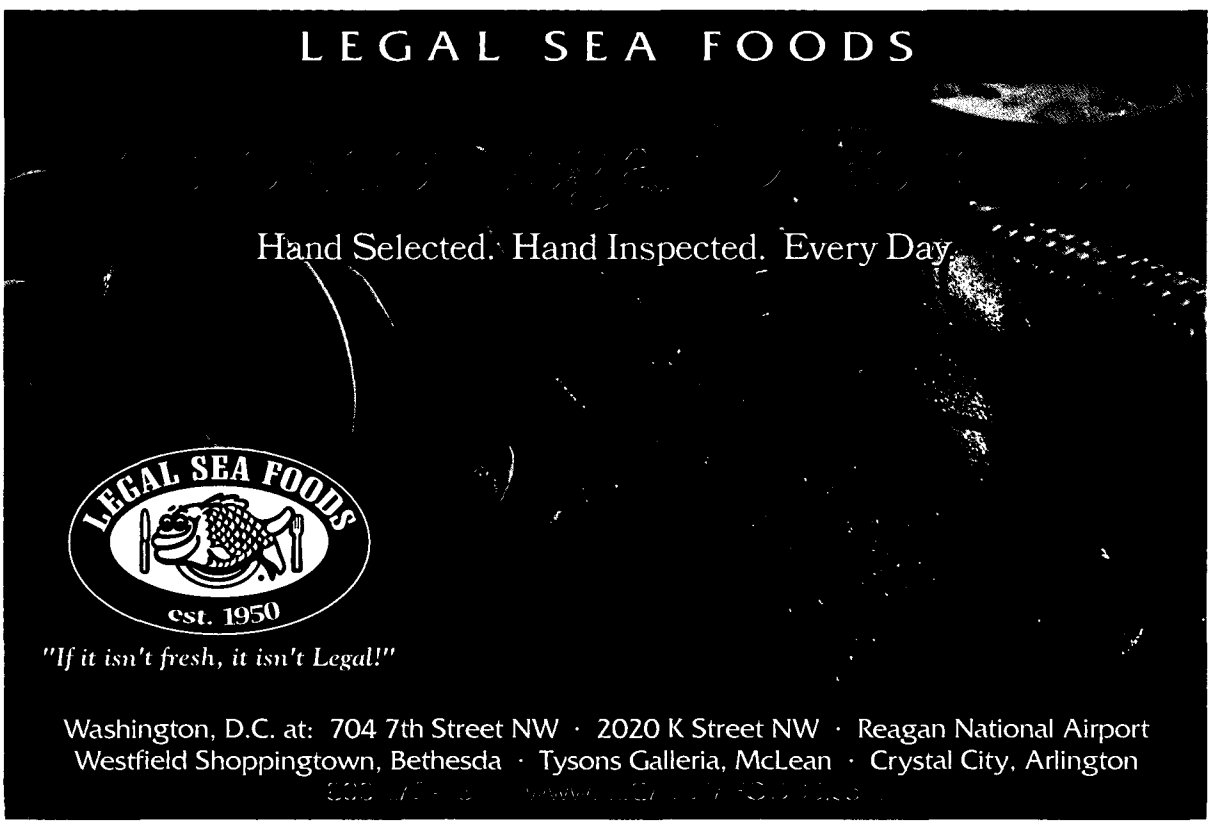
Some leaders grasped new technologies: FDR understood radio, but Nixon in the 1950s didn't "get" TV; LBJ, for his part, invented the 30-second attack ad, a development that draws praise. (Again, look elsewhere for moral tutelage.) Tony Blair of Britain and Junichiro Koizumi of Japan revolutionized their own political parties to gain power, while George McGovern—refreshingly analyzed as a consequential leader and not just as an epithet—alienated party leaders while transforming the Democrats. He deftly shows how FDR and Winston Churchill rallied their countries by never sugarcoating bad news at the dawn of World War II, contrasting that candor with Lyndon Johnson's credibility gap in Vietnam.

Morris is best known for counseling Clinton to blunt the Republican surge of the mid-1990s by coopting their strongest issues, advice he repeats here. He makes a good case that George W. Bush, running for president in 2000, did the same with his mantra of "compassionate conservatism." Like nearly all pundits, Morris ignores the degree to which Clinton's challenge to his own party's base was substantive, while Bush's was little more than rhetorical colorizing. He also notes, "The lesson from Clinton and Bush is clear: You can move to the center by trying to solve the problems normally associated with the other party, but don't abandon all the traditional positions of your own party on the issues with which it is normally associated." Hence W's tax-cut fetish, and Clinton's honorable support for civil rights and affirmative action (a position, it must be noted, that Morris urged him not to take at the time).

But acute though these profiles are, they don't cohere. Clinton and Bush won by seizing the middle ground—but Reagan and DeGaulle are praised for sticking with principle and waiting for the public to come to them. What's an aspiring Great Man to do? Ultimately, the you-are-there ephemera of tactics looms too large. Sure, McGovern and his legions needlessly humiliated party bosses such as Mayor Daley in 1972. But can we really imagine the South Dakotan beating Nixon that year, no matter how well he ran? Could Barry Goldwater ever have topped LBJ in 1964? Profound economic and social forces shaped those races far more than the "power plays" outlined in this book.

The best way to read this book is the way Clinton read Morris's memos and polls. He clearly valued Morris and saw through him at the same time. Morris's earlier books to the contrary, Clinton never gave him free rein. He pitted him against more traditional Democrats such as chief of staff Leon Panetta, rarely letting one faction know what the other was up to. That way Clinton could be the broker, picking among the best arguments and policies. It was grueling. I had always read about how FDR did the same thing, giving rivals Harold Ickes and Harry Hopkins the same assignment, but never realized how demoralizing that could be. But the period of creative friction produced perhaps the most fruitful period of the Clinton presidency. In reading this book, be like Bill: Take Morris's advice with a large pinch of salt.

MICHAEL WALDMAN *teaches at the John F. Kennedy School at Harvard. He was the director of speechwriting for President Bill Clinton from 1995-1999.*



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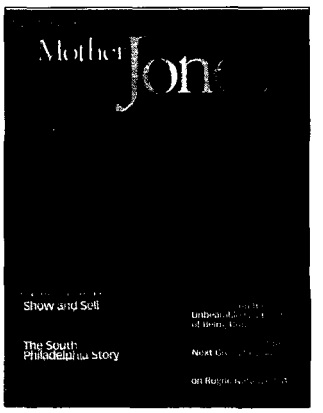

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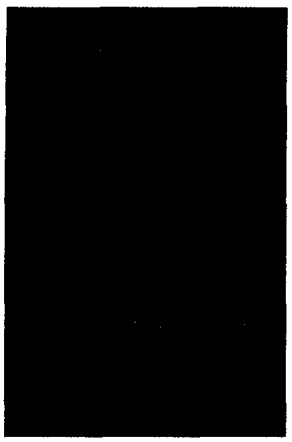

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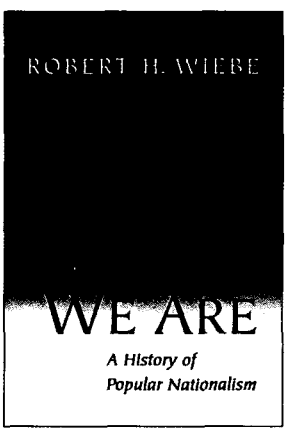

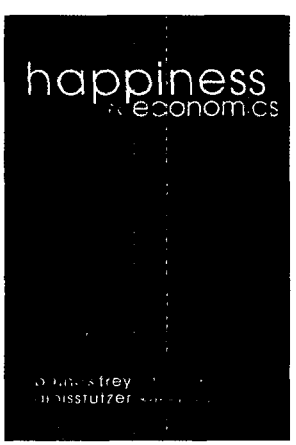

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Bruno S. Frey and Alois Stutzer

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Not surprisingly, the authors confirm that unemployment and inflation nurture unhappiness. Their most striking revelation, however, is that the more developed the democratic institutions and the degree of local autonomy, the more satisfied people are with their lives.

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